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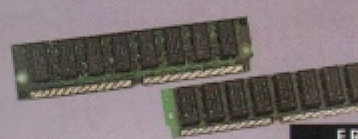
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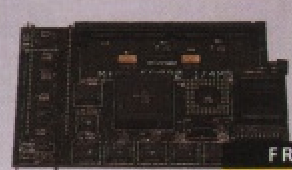
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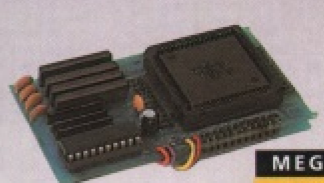
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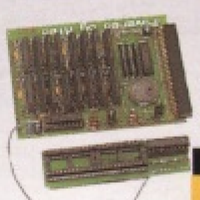
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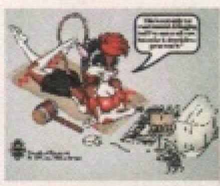


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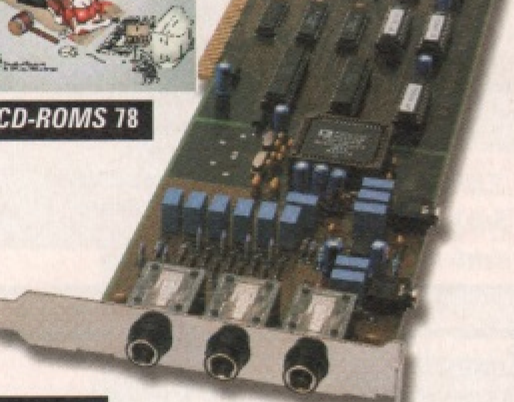
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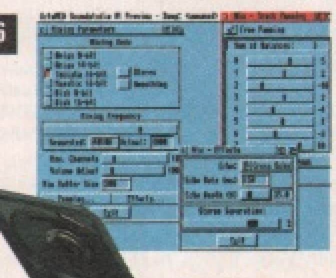
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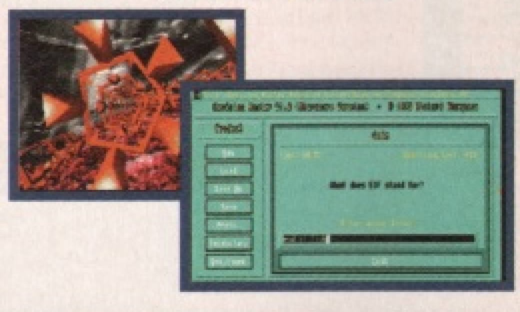


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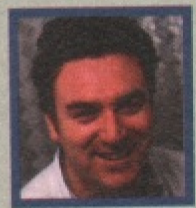
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Editorial



And so we've reached April, and things are beginning to brighten up on some fronts. Despite a miserable Christmas and a staff lay-off that had us all worried Amiga Technologies have reaffirmed their commitment to the UK market, as you will read in the news section this month. It's a commitment that has short, medium and long term aspects and should see the market remaining on track, perhaps even picking up, throughout this year.

You will have noticed, as of last issue and from now on, we were forced to put up the cover price to £4.50. CU Amiga Magazine is a high cost publication and unfortunately the returns from advertising which have traditionally helped pay the way have dropped significantly in the last 12 months. As I've stated before we've tried to avert price rises for as long as possible, but the inevitable must happen sooner or later. Which makes our new subscriptions offers all the more attractive. At £36 in the UK this equates to just £3.00 an issue, and massive reductions are also available to overseas readers. Half year subscriptions are now available too, and though these are not discounted, please take into account that you do get the magazine delivered to your door, and you're only committing for six months. There's never been a better time to subscribe.

Alan Dykes, Editor

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COMMS: You can contact CU AMIGA MAGAZINE, via the Internet/E-Mail on general@cu-amiga.demon.co.uk. Please keep E-Mail brief and to the point.

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DISK 130

- **AmiFileSafe**
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- **HippoPlayer**



HippoPlayer

HippoPlayer is an intelligent music module player which is capable of loading and autodetecting the format of a wide range of modules, including ProTracker, OctaMED, SID, TFMX, ScreamTracker, FastTracker and more. Modules packed with XPK, FImp, PowerPacker, Lha, LZX and Zip compression systems are supported. The Reqtools.library file must be in your Libs: drawer for it to work. If you've already installed the rest of the disk then this should already be the case, and if you have a hard drive, you may have it from some previous application's installer. Try running the HiP program and if you need the library you'll be told so, in which case you can run the Install_Vitals script first. Full documentation is available in the form of the HiP.guide document.

Keep your data safe as houses with AFS, Virus 2 and HippoPlayer, all on cover disk 130.

If you don't have CD-ROM capability and have our floppy disk version instead of the CD-ROM one you won't be disappointed. We've got some very handy utilities on there.

Ami File Safe

Ami File Safe (AFS) is an alternative filing system for your floppy disks and hard drives. Disks formatted with AFS are faster, more efficient and less prone to errors than disks formatted and written with the Amiga's built in filing systems. AFS also allows you to fit more data on your disks.

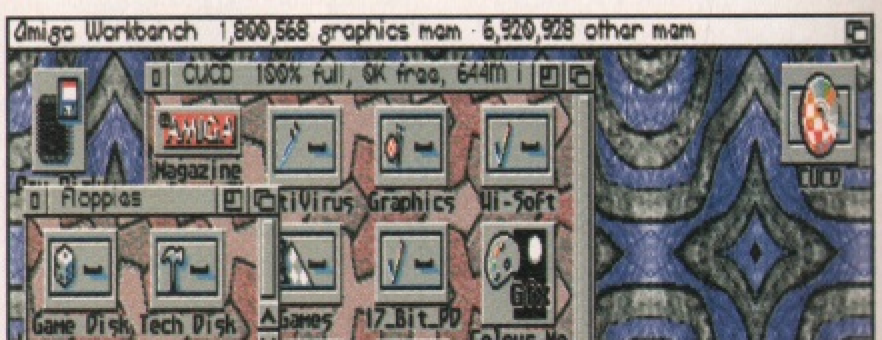
Cover disk 130 contains two versions of Fourth Level Development's AFS. One is a complete version for use with floppy drives while the other is for hard drives, limited to a maximum partition size of 10Mb.

Floppy installation

If you are running a floppy-only system you'll first need to make a copy of your Workbench disk and clear some space on the copy. Rename the copy of Workbench so that it is named exactly the same as the original. Put the original Workbench disk away and work only with the copy for now. Leaving the copy of Workbench write enabled, delete the Tools drawer to free up some space.

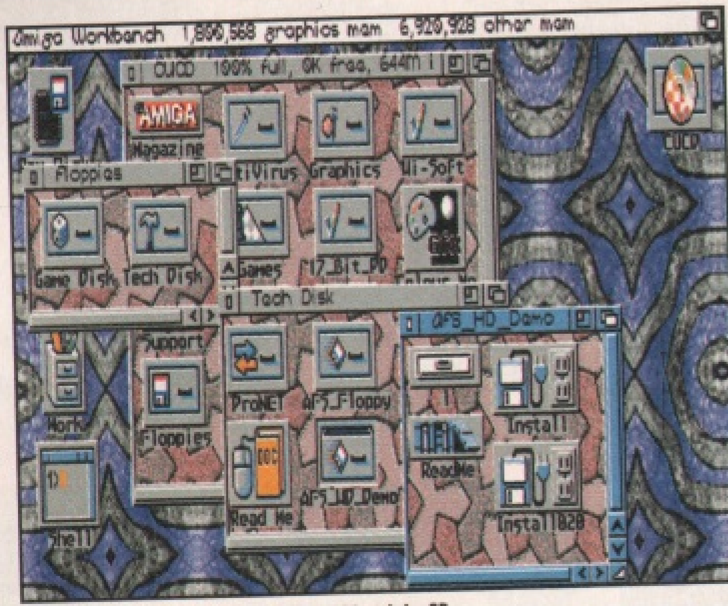
Boot from your Workbench copy, insert cover disk 130 and double click on its icon. Open the AFSFloppy drawer and you'll see four icons in a new window marked install_2.0 and install_3.0, along with 020 versions of both. The 2.0 and 3.0 refer to your Amiga's operating system (Workbench and Kickstart), while the 020 versions are for Amigas with 68020 or better processors. Double click on one of the icons according to your system.

AFS will now be installed onto your copy of Workbench. If you have just one floppy drive you'll be in for a lot of disk swapping but everything will work out in the end. Time to get a hard drive perhaps? Whenever you want to use



▲ AFS can vastly improve your disk efficiency.

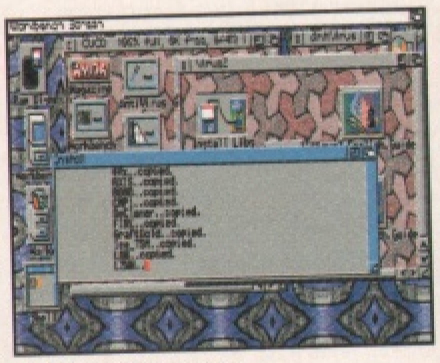
VirusZ



▲ VirusZ is on disk 130 and the CD.

VirusZ is a neat virus checker that sits in the background of your Amiga's operating system, checking for suspicious activity that could be caused by a virus. It can also be used to check specified disks and files for virus infection. We chose to include VirusZ on disk 130 as its 'brain file' is well up to date and can detect just about all the latest viruses. We can't guarantee that it will catch every virus, as new ones appear all the time, but it's the best way to keep your Amiga safe.

To run it on a floppy-only system you'll need some space free on your Workbench disk. This is because VirusZ needs a library that it expects to find in the Libs: drawer of your Workbench system. If you've already installed AFS Floppy as described on the page opposite you should have enough space on your copy of Workbench. Boot this and then double click the Install Libs icon in the VirusZ drawer. The relevant files will be copied to your Workbench disk. You can now run the VirusZ program straight from the cover disk.



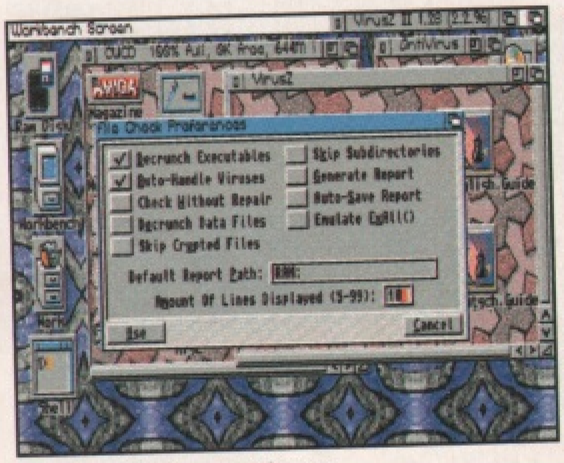
▲ Installation is very simple.

Hard drive users should boot the hard drive and then use the Install Libs icon. If you have the CD edition you'll find VirusZ in the AntiVirus drawer. We recommend you drag the VirusZ icon into the WBStartup drawer, or alternatively copy VirusZ onto your hard drive and call it from the user-startup sequence.

What to do with VIrusZ

Once VirusZ is running you can set a number of options to configure it to your requirements. Click on the VirusZ bar at the top of the Workbench screen so that it becomes active. Now when you hold down the right mouse button you'll see VirusZ menus appear rather than the usual Workbench menus.

Selections from the first menu will carry out tasks, while the second menu is used to set the options for the tasks. From the Prefs/File Check option we suggest you click the Decrunch Executables button and save the changes. This will mean that compressed files will be unpacked and checked during a File Check process. To check a disk or a directory of files, select the File Check option from the Project menu, choose your area from the file requester (use the All button for speed once you've selected the disk) and click OK. You'll be given a progress report as the program checks all the files. If you have AmigaGuide installed on your machine you can read up on all the advanced options from the VirusZ English.guide document on the disk.



▲ Configure VirusZ to your requirements.

AFS disks you will need to boot with this copy of Workbench.

Using AFS Floppy

Now it's installed, you won't actually get an AFS disk icon on the Workbench until you have formatted an AFS disk. Because there is no disk icon you can't use the Workbench menus to format an AFS disk – you'll have to use the Shell instead. Enter the following in a Shell window, pressing Return after each line:

```
cd sys:system
resident format
```

The above lines will make formatting disks a lot simpler. Now to actually format an AFS disk, insert a blank into the internal floppy drive and enter the following all on one line and press Return:

```
format DRIVE af0: NAME
afsdisk
```

In the line above, pay close attention to the case of the letters (capitals where appropriate) and make sure you enter AF0: with a zero, not a letter O. You can now read and write to and from the disk in the internal drive by addressing it as AF0:. You'll notice that an icon called 'afsdisk' has now appeared on the Workbench. When you format another AFS disk, change the 'afsdisk' part of the line above to a different name. This will become the volume name of the formatted disk.

Hard drive installation

To install AFS onto your hard drive, boot from your hard drive and then insert either cover disk 130 or the CD if you have the CD edition of this month's CU Amiga Magazine. If you want to use AFS on both floppy disks and your hard drive, you'll need to run the floppy installer too. Double click on the relevant icon from the AFS_Floppy drawer and see the text above marked Using AFS Floppy for more details.

Installation of the AFS HD demo is more complex. Select or make a suitable partition on your hard drive. All the data in the selected partition will be destroyed when installing Ami-FileSafe, so make sure you make a back-up. Ami-FileSafe must be installed in the l: directory. You can do this by double clicking on the Install or Install020 (For 68020+ machines) icon.

Now you can install Ami File Safe on the RidgidDiskBlock. You can use Commodore's HDToolbox which comes supplied with the Workbench software. We assume here that you will use HDToolbox. If you use another tool you should refer to its documentation.

Select Advanced Options in the the Partitioning window. A number of extra buttons will appear. Click on Add/update... and then click Add New File System. Type in:

```
L:HardDiskAFS
```

for the name of the file system. Set the Dostype field to 0x41465301 and then select Ok. Go back to the Partitioning window, select the desired partition and select the Change button. Select Ami-FileSafe (AFS\1). Use all the default options: automount on, block size 512, 2 reserved blocks.

If you are using an older version of HDToolBox and there is not a Change button then click on Custom File System and then type 0x41465301 into the Dostype field. Change the Buffers field to a value between 50-200 depending on how much memory you have free (1 Buffer = 1K).

If you are using an IDE drive then set the Maxtransfer value to 0x1ffff. Now select Ok and the Partioning menu will appear again. Fill in the name you want the device to have in the Partition Device Name field (e.g. DH1). Set the the Bootable flag if you want to boot from this partition. Go back to the main screen and save the changes.

Ami File Safe should now be installed on the partition. Reboot and format the partition from Workbench. If you have done something wrong then go back and start again. ■

The World's FASTEST AMIGAS are on this page!



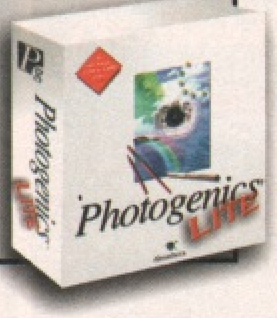
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Standard A4000, '040	19.10
A1200 with 1260, '060 & 4Mb	37.40
A1500 /2000 with 2060, '060 & 4Mb	37.40
A4000 with Cyberstorm, '060 & 4Mb	39.85

Figures shown are in MIPS and taken from comparative performance tests using SysInfo standards (1230-IV, 1260, 2060 and Cyberstorm ratings use 60 Nanosecond SIMMs).

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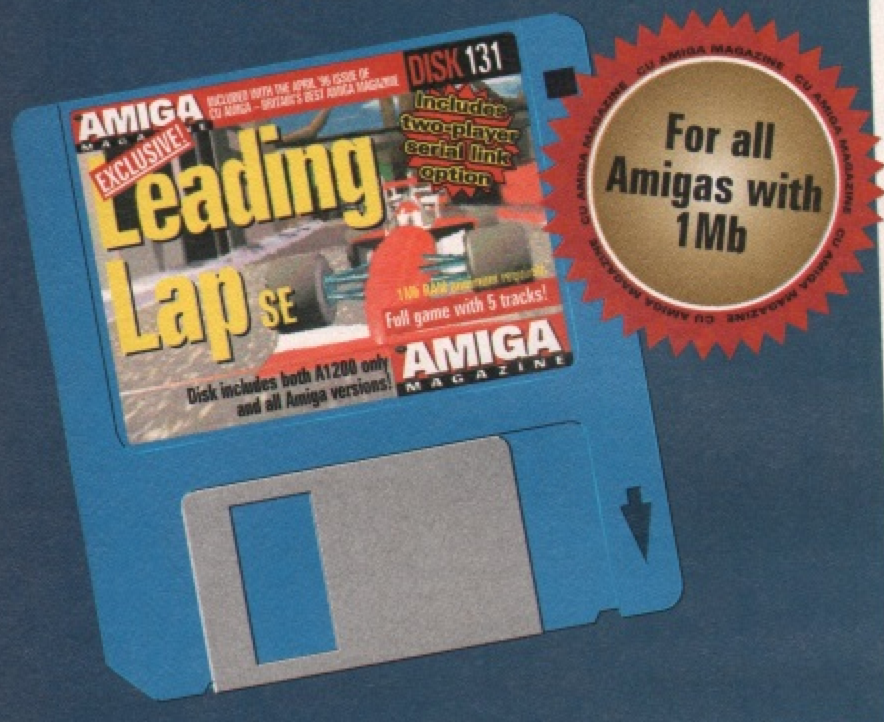
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DISK 129 Leading Lap SE

A game by Reflex Interactive/Kellion



Chose your driver, choose your car, fire up those engines and get going. This polygon racing sim is yours EXCLUSIVELY from CU Amiga Magazine ...

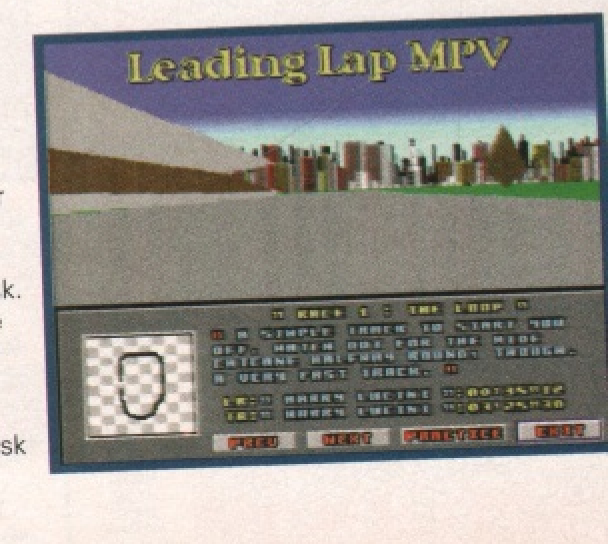
If software houses won't publish games like Leading Lap for you we will. It's not the full commercial release though – how would Reflex Interactive survive if we went around putting their bread and butter on our disk? But it is the full game nonetheless, with five tracks, that's why it's the special edition. We'd sooner bear the brunt of bad feeling in the games industry than see you deprived of it though.

There are two versions on the disk, for both AGA and ECS. The A500/600 version will work on the A1200 and it'll be faster too, but the AGA version does have more sound effects and more detailed scenery. Needless to say the AGA version will not work on an A500/600. You will need to decompress the version of your choice to a separate single disk. This is a simple process. 1. Have a new, blank formatted disk close to hand and turn off your Amiga. 2. Write protect disk 131 and insert it into the internal drive. 3. Turn on your Amiga and wait until a CU Amiga loading screen appears. This will have two disk icons on it. 4. Follow the instructions to press either F1 or F2 to decompress either the AGA or standard version on Leading Lap to your blank disk. 5. Once all files have been decompressed onto the blank disk simply restart your machine with this disk in the drive and the game will start. Label this new disk "Leading Lap SE". Put disk 131 in a safe place in case of future problems. If you have any difficulty decompressing or loading the disk then turn to page 23 for advice.

Running Leading Lap SE

Leading Lap SE is simple to load and run, but it'll take some time to get used to the tracks. It requires joystick or joypad, and will not respond to mouse control. Once you've loaded the game you'll enter a menu screen which asks you to Start Season or enter a Grudge Match. If you have a serial null modem cable you can use the grudge match option to play against a friend with another Amiga. More details about this under the heading Serial Play.

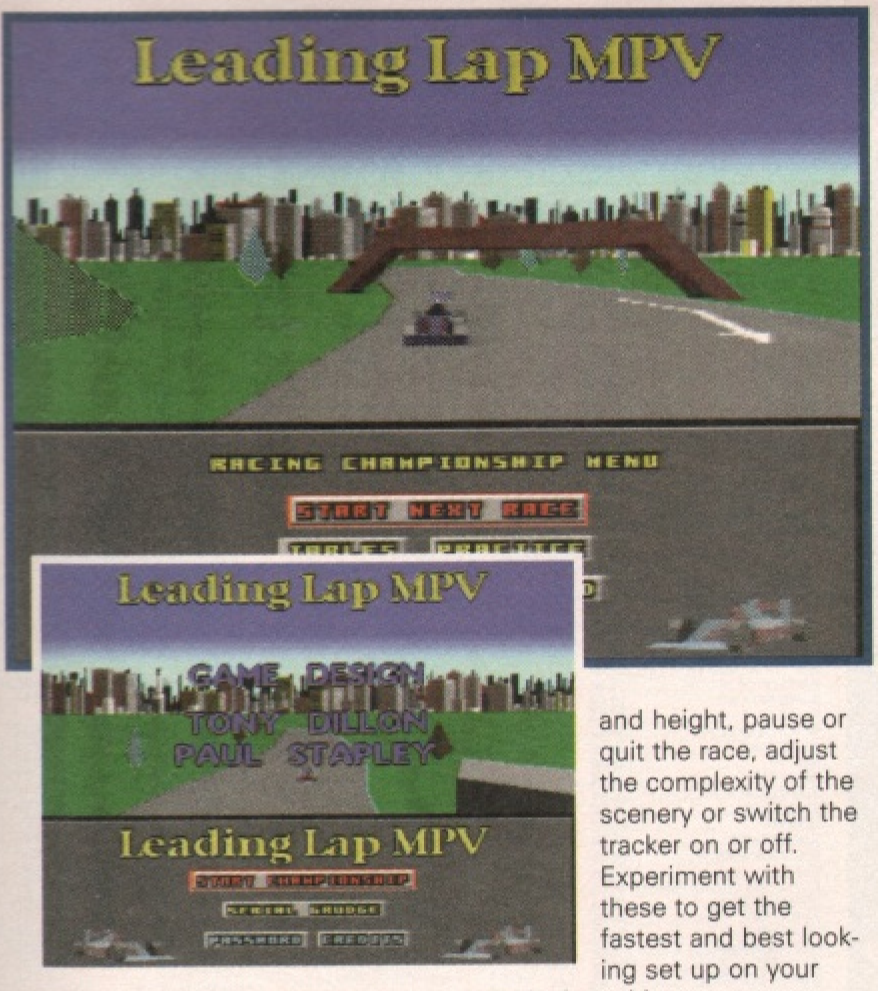
Pressing the Start Season option will bring up your choice of driver. There are five to select from and you can find out more about them by pressing the driver stats button on the driver select



These are the main controls:

- Joystick forward: Accelerate
- Joystick back: Brake
- Joystick left: Turn left
- Joystick right: Turn right
- Esc: Quit race/Continue
- P: Pause and options
- Space bar: Toggle camera height
- F1-F10: Adjust viewing angles/view other cars
- Return: Return to your car





Compatibility ...

Leading Lap has been tested on Amiga 500, 500+, 600, 1200 and 4000. It works even if there is a hard drive present and works with the Blizzard 1230 accelerator board we use regularly. However, if you have problems with Leading Lap it may have something to do with the peripherals you have plugged in. If so, test it without your RAM or Accelerator, or any other peripherals. It will work! Believe us!

screen. Once you've chosen your driver press on next. This will bring up your car selection screen. Here you have a choice of three vehicles. Pressing on next after this will bring up the Racing Championship menu. Here you can enter the championship immediately by choosing to Start Next Race, or practice any one of the five tracks in the Practice mode.

Racing controls

Leading Lap uses both joystick and keyboard during a race. The joystick is the primary control device but using the keyboard you can adjust the viewing angle and height, pause or quit the race, adjust the complexity of the scenery or switch the tracker on or off. Experiment with these to get the fastest and best looking set up on your individual machine.

Serial linking ...

If you want to get really competitive you should find a friend with an Amiga and a null modem cable. You can link up two A500s or two A1200s or, say an A500 and an A1200. If you do the latter though you must remember that the person with the A1200 will have an advantage and you must be running the non-AGA version on both machines. This type of link will crash more often than a link between two similar machines.

To link up you need to have the cable plugged into the serial ports of both Amigas, and then load Leading Lap SE. When you reach the first options screen select Grudge Match and then simultaneously select either Grudge League or Single Match from the next two selections.

If you are properly connected the link will take about 5 seconds to establish. After this one of you should receive a message saying something like "link successful, you are the slave". The other will receive a message saying "link successful, you are the master". It is important that the slave makes their driver and car selection first, otherwise the link has a tendency to crash. Once the slave has made his or her selection the master needs to select drive, then car, then which one of the five tracks you want to race on. After this the race will begin as normal except you'll both be racing against each other on different Amigas and different screens.

If your link crashes then restart everything all over again, having first checked that your null modem cable is properly connected.

All serial links have a tendency to disconnect from time to time for no apparent reason, but if you play things by the book it shouldn't happen too often. ■



Problems and the track editor

There are two versions of leading lap on both the cover disk and CD you now own. It is fully functioning in all ways: you can enter competitions, you can race against human competition using a serial link, you can do everything you could in the full version of the game we reviewed three months ago, except race on some of the tracks. This is yours to play for as long as you want, for the cover price of the magazine: there are no catches. But Reflex Interactive, who supplied us with the game, are doing an upgrade offer too, the sort of one you usually see with a utility. This gives you seven more tracks, extra sound effects, a track editor (AGA only) and an objects suite (AGA only) which will allow you to make up your own tracks. This is the difference between Leading Lap MPV as reviewed and Leading Lap SE. If you have any problems with Leading Lap SE or you would like to upgrade to the extra tracks and the editor please write to Reflex Interactive at CU Amiga Leading Lap SE, REFLEX INTERACTIVE, 13 Hawley Crescent, London NW1 8NP. The extra 7 tracks and SFX is available for A500/600 at £4.99 plus 1.95 P+P, while the AGA only track editor, plus the extra tracks, objects and SFX is £12.99 plus £1.95 P+P.

On the CD



If you have the CD-ROM version of the magazine you will find Leading Lap already uncompressed in the Floppy folder. To run it on an A1200 simply double click on the AGA version to run it on an A500/600 double click on the standard version. If you have a CD32 you will unfortunately not have enough memory to run the full AGA version so double click on the standard version. This is faster anyway, so don't worry. A bonus for CD32 owners is that the joypad operates the various views via its multiple buttons. Try this.

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TERMITE COMMS PACKAGE KICKSTART 2.04+	35.99	£3
WORDWORTH V1.2 SE	14.99	35

Amiga A1200 & Compatible

TITLE	OUR PRICE	SAVE
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What's on your



Mat Bettinson guides you through the 650Mb of goodies on this month's cover CD.

Getting started

You can boot this month's cover CD on any CD-ROM compatible Amiga or CD32. Alternatively you can boot from your hard drive first and access the CD from there. If you choose this method, double click the InitCD icon (this is a very small icon in the bottom right of the CD window). This will set up the system so that much of the software can be run straight from the CD. There's no need to do this if you booted from the CD.

You'll notice that the icons are rather attractive but the colours may not be quite right. If this is the case, double click the ColourMe icon. These rather attractive icons were kindly supplied by Tom Ekström from his Iconographics 3.0 set.

All of the main areas can be access from the root directory of the CD (the main CUCD window). In general, if you open a drawer and find some icons inside, you should be able to click and run them. On the other hand, if you are presented with a list of filenames and no icons, it's likely that these files must be loaded into an application or handled in some other way (such as the Imagine objects for example which can only be used by loading them into Imagine).

The drawer icons that feature a tick mark all contain demos of existing CD-ROM titles and commercial packages, with a very generous selection of the software for you to try out. These CD previews are themselves contained in drawers marked with CD icons. These CD demos have their own front-ends that are used to access their files.

Now here's a guide to all the major areas of this month's CU Amiga Magazine CD-ROM.

Magazine

Contents: tie-in files for the following magazine departments areas: PD Scene, Wired World, Graphics Masterclass, Q+A Masterclass and more.



The freely distributable software from PD Scene can be found in this drawer. All the software here is stored as DMS archives because it would not all run from the CD. You'll be prompted for blank disks as you select them. Also see the Misc/The_Party_95 drawer for more demos, some of which run from the CD.

Graphics Masterclass contains images for use with this month's tutorial, along with a few from previous issues. You'll find some more in the Images directory which includes some that were missing from our previous CD-ROM edition.

The Wired World directory contains the newest version of Metatool, the MIME encoding/decoding tool as featured in John Kennedy's Wired World tutorial this month. In order to install to your hard drive, simply drag the directory to an appropriate place. The Q+A Masterclass directory contains the ARexx script files as covered by John Kennedy in the Q+A Masterclass tutorial this month. Finally, the Amiga E directory contains virtually all the developers material for Amiga E as cover mounted on the December edition of CU Amiga Magazine. A great many archives have been extracted to this directory so viewing via Workbench will be messy. A directory utility would be best to find the Amiga E support files you need. Documentation for each will also be present in the same directory.

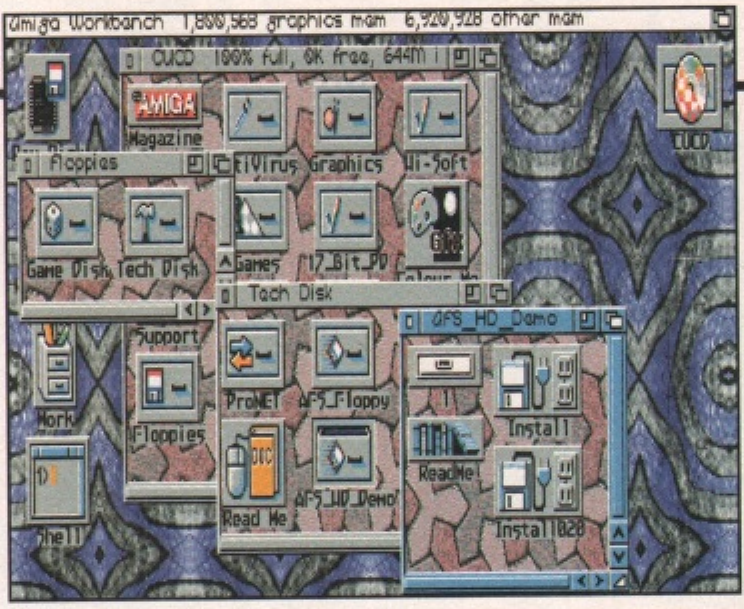
Floppies

Contents: ECS (A500) and AGA (A1200) versions of Leading Lap SE full game. VirusZ anti-virus package, AFS hard drive demo, AFS floppy full version.

Leading Lap SE can be found here in DMS archive format, for both ECS and AGA machines.

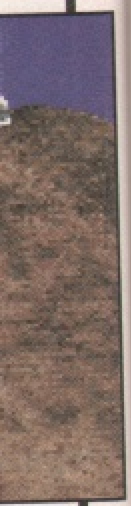
The 'Tech disk' section contains the complete Pronet system with full documentation. For more information on the rest of the programs in this drawer, see the floppy disk instruction pages.

Shortly after the CD went to press, we found the VirusZ drawer mistakenly contains Virus Checker and not VirusZ. This is not a problem since VirusZ is also present in the Antivirus drawer off the root of the CD. Installing Virus Checker isn't a bad idea either for double protection. Installation is easy. Just boot from your own Workbench and click on the Install_Virus_Checker icon.



CD-ROM





Support

Contents: Iconographics Icon replacement set, MUI 3.2 (fixed) support GUI system, Delitracker comprehensive module player and Viewtek 2.1 viewer.

The Support drawer contains a number of programs that are required by the CUCD and its software. First off, the Iconographics package is the top left icon. Click on Install_Icons to install these icons onto your Workbench, or the IGfx_Preview icon to show a picture of an example Iconographics Workbench. The IconInstaller program is a manual installation method using a drag and drop interface.

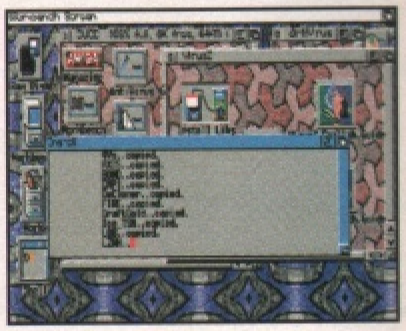
Magic User Interface 3.2 (MUI) is an extension of the Workbench system and is required by some software. If you didn't boot the CD, you'll have to click on the InitCD Icon in the root directory to temporarily run MUI from the CD. If you intend to install MUI it would be a good idea to drag the MUI drawer onto your own HD as it will run much quicker.

The SuperViewCD drawer contains an exclusive CD demo of the wonderful multi viewer/converter package called SuperView. SuperView uses special loader and saver libraries to load virtually any type of picture and save out as any other type of picture. What's more, it can display on virtually any display system from the Amiga's native ECS and AGA chip-sets to graphics boards and RTG systems such as CyberGraphX. Read the docs to gain more information and if you think it suits you, click the Install_SuperView icon to install to your HD.

Delitracker_II contains the Amiga's most powerful and comprehensive module playing utilities around. It handles virtually every type of module and can play from Fast RAM and even 14-bit playing and headphone mixing. Reading the documentation is highly recommended. Delitracker is activated by the Johan Alpmar ProTracker and the ScreamTracker jukebox icons in the modules section of the CD.

Finally, ViewTek is a picture viewer able to handle most types of files. It's simple to use and downgrades high-colour pictures such as 256 colour GIFs/IFFs and JPegs to ECS HAM6 screen modes on non-AGA machines.

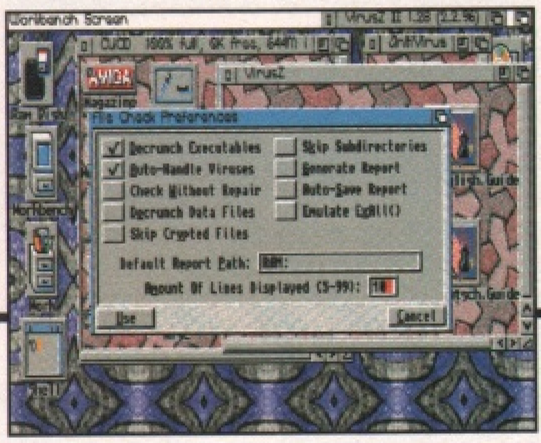
AntiVirus



Contents: Virus Checker and VirusZ anti-virus package complete with VList list of fake-virus infected archives and files.

To tie in with our AntiVirus feature in CU Amiga Magazine this month, the top two virus checkers are included so that you may rest easy against the threat of a damaging virus attack. It's best to boot from your hard drive if you want to install these. To install Virus Checker, click on the Install_Virus_Checker icon.

Before you can run VirusZ you'll need to click on the Install Libraries icon. Now drag the entire VirusZ directory onto your hard drive. Now you can put either or both of the virus checkers in your WBStartup drawer to have them permanently resident. Check page 10 for further VirusZ instructions.





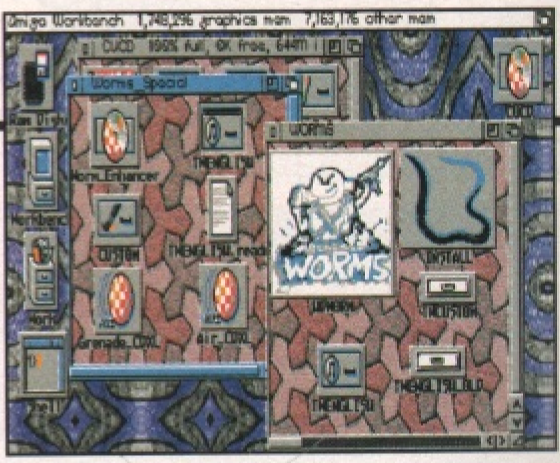
Games

Contents: Worms Special section, Blitzbombers demo, Watchtower demo, Nemac IV demo + many full PD/ Shareware games.

Click on the Worms Special icon and you'll find a number of support files for Worms and a preview of a forthcoming Worms Enhancer CD-ROM. The maps contained here and in the Custom directory must be copied to your Worms TWCustom drawer on your hard drive or onto fresh disks if you're playing from floppy. Read the documents here to find out more about the Worm map creators.

Next are four large ball icons with CDXL in their names. These are two of the CDXL animations from CD32 version of Worms. The CD32 icons should be clicked on only by users of CD32s and CD32 emulating CD-ROMs. The others should be used by those using SCSI CD-ROMs.

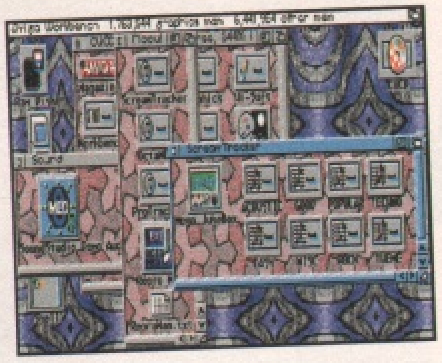
The last directory TWENGLISH, is a complete replacement sample set made by the CU Amiga team. Some of the samples came from smaller replacement sample sets. Many thanks to Jon Guidry and Richard Smith for their contributions. To install this set onto hard drive, open up your Worms directory. Select the window and choose Window/Show/All Files from the Workbench menu. Find the drawer called TWENGLISH and rename to TWENGLISH_OLD. Then simply drag the TWENGLISH drawer from the Worms Special directory onto your Worms directory.



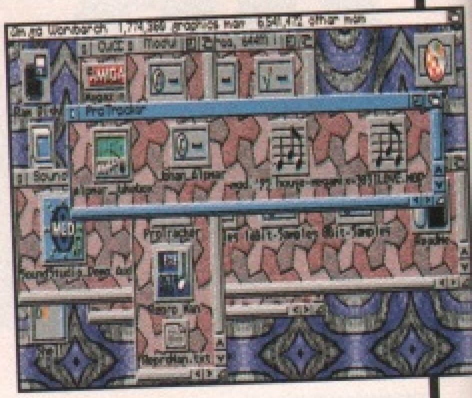
Please not that floppy drive users will need to format a floppy disk with the name TW2. Then drag the TWENGLISH directory into this floppy disk. When Worms is running and asks for the second disk, insert your new floppy disk instead of the original Worms disk two. OK. Now enjoy.

Sound

Contents: OctaMED SoundStudio demo, Audio Lab 16 demo, high quality 8 and 16-bit samples. ProTracker, OctaMED and ScreamTracker modules and jukeboxes.



The Sound drawer contains a save disabled demo of the 16-bit-capable OctaMED SoundStudio (see the preview on page 69). An AudioLab16 2.0 demo is included, which can take digital sample data from audio CDs, provide DSP style effects, process 16-bit samples and more. Tony Horgan has returned with another sound sample collection. The drawers are split into 8 and 16-bit samples. The 8-bit sound samples are a varied bunch including loops, hits, effects and so on. Double click on them to hear them. U4ia/F8 has supplied some original drum loops. For 16-bit audio users there's a complete TR-909 drum kit and some TR-808 bass drums.

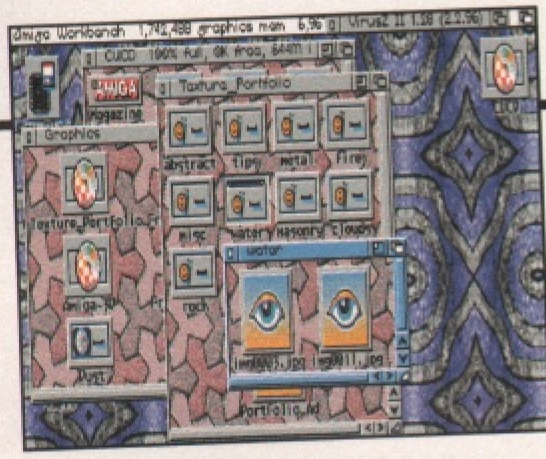


A great deal of modules in many formats are included in the modules directory grouped into ScreamTracker, OctaMED and ProTracker. The ScreamTracker module collection has a special jukebox icon which will launch Delitracker to play from the collection at random. The ProTracker collection has a jukebox dedicated to module author Johan Almar. All of Johan's works that we could find are included, again the jukebox will play from them at random.

The OctaMED directory contains the entire works of Samuel Gilbert AKA Orpheus, plus a few of Tony Horgan's old mods. All these modules have icons to launch DeliTracker. The modules with the '9' postfix are special 9-bit modules and Delitracker will use its 14-bit noteplayer to render them correctly.

Graphics

Contents: Fresh Fonts I + II CD previews, Amiga3D Imagine objects CD preview, Dust utility for rendering packages.



The CUCD Graphics drawer is loaded with four massive CD previews. Fresh Fonts Vol I contains many megabytes of DMF fonts suitable for PageStream (December's cover disk). The fonts can be loaded straight from PageStream. Fresh Fonts Vol II contains megabytes of IntelliFonts, support for which is built into Workbench and many other Amiga programs.

The Amiga-3D CD preview is an exclusive 20Mb sample of Imagine 3D objects from the BlitterSoft Amiga-3D CD. The objects have no icons and so you will have to access them directly from Imagine. However, using the Hi-Soft MagicLink's demo might give you a better idea of what each object looks like.

The IML drawer contains a massive back archive of Internet Imagine Mailing List archives as large text files and AmigaGuides. You will need to use a text viewer or Amiga Guide utility to view them. They are an excellent reference for troubleshooting with Imagine.

The Dust drawer contains a powerful package for producing 'particle' effects for Imagine and other types of rendering package. Dust will run from the CD fine but it's recommended that you drag the drawer across to a hard drive partition if you intend to use it regularly. Again comprehensive documentation is provided on the CD for the package and in the case of Dust, it's an essential read. Click on some of the faces for some example images of what Dust can do.

Texture_Portfolio represents the final CD preview, this time from Ground Zero PD, and is a selection of high quality JPegs 24-bit textures which can be used for several tasks, such as backdrops for multimedia and wrap-on textures for 3D rendering. The collection has icons for each picture which when clicked will activated the ViewTek viewer to display the texture concerned. Clicking on the Portfolio_Ad icon in the root directory of Texture_Portfolio will reveal ordering information for the excellent full CD. There are also support utilities for Imagine.

AlfaTexture contains some new third party mathematical textures for Imagine 3.0 and above, AnimFlare is an example project and tutorial for producing animated flare effects and the d2imagine.guide is a comprehensive AmigaGuide Imagine tutorial which if used in conjunction with the Imagine Mailing List archives and Imagine HTML tutorial/reference in the Comms/WWW section provides a massive reference for this excellent rendering package.

Hi-Soft

Contents: Demos of Cinema 4D rendering package, Magic Link 3D object converter, Disk Magic directory utility, Termite comms terminal package, Twist 2 database and more.

All of the demonstration packages in the Hi-Soft directory at the top right of the CUCD root directory, except Termite, can run directly from the CD. Termite will need to be installed to hard drive. The Twist2-Demo is a demo of the Twist2 database. To activate it click on the Run Demo icon within its drawer. The same goes for DiskMagic, a demo of the top rated directory utility. DiskMagic will need the Setup-DiskMagic icon clicked on before the DiskMAGIC_Demo icon.

MagicLink-Demo is a demonstration version of a new 3D object converter by Maxon. Again, a simple double-click is all that's required . MagicLink will happily convert between many different types of objects and even provide a preview picture. Hand in hand with Magic Link comes the Cinema4D-demo. Be sure to read the Cinema4D-Tutorial.txt file which also details the features missing from the demonstration version. After running Cinema4D, select Project/Load and pick one of the provided projects to give C4D a spin.

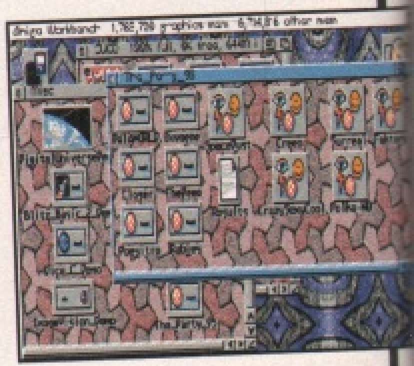
Misc

Contents: BlitzBasic 2.1 and Dice 3.0 programming language demos, AGA experience CD preview, AIBB benchmarking tool, Digital Universe demo (MUI) and ImageVision demo.

This directory contains two complete demo programming environments for Blitz Basic 2 and Dice C 3.0. Digital Universe is a demo of an astronomy package similar to Distant Suns and will be reviewed next issue. ImageVision_Demo is a demo of a multimedia authoring package from BlitterSoft also to be reviewed next issue.

The Everybody's Girlfriend drawer has a compressed audio sample of David Pleasance, ex MD of Commodore UK, playing flamenco guitar on the ParaMiAmiga track off the album Everybody's Girlfriend.

The AIBB drawer contains the AIBB benchmarking utility. There are lots of modules of various Amiga system benchmarks which can be loaded into AIBB for comparison. The_Party_95 drawer contains a large number of The Party 95 demos, many of which can be run directly but some may need to be copied onto floppies or hard drive. Playing the DataWorld animation is essential but you'll need the right libraries installed.



Lastly, a CD preview of Sadeness Software's AGA-Experience CD-ROM is included. To access this simply click on the AGA-Experience icon to open the drawer and then the CLICKME! icon to activate the GUI front end.

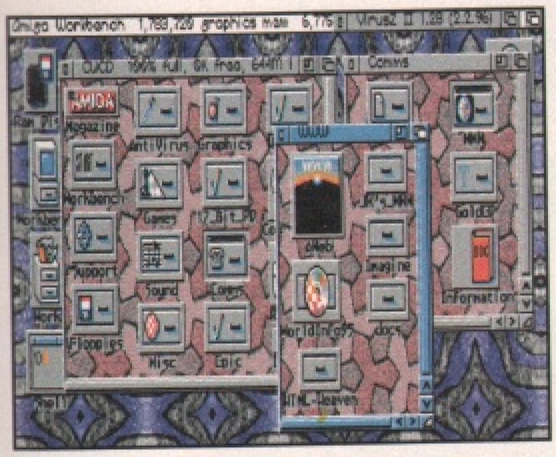
Comms

Contents: Zeus BBS demo, Thor mail and news browser, AWeb WWW Browser demo and CU Amiga home page + World of Info CD preview.



This directory is dedicated to communications and Internet related material but contains plenty of interest to non modem users. Firstly there's an entire archive of Jason Compton's Amiga Report electronic magazine. You'll find this in the Amiga Report drawer. To view each magazine, simply click on the icons. Next up are a couple of demonstration packages which must be installed to your hard drive. These are the Thor Internet Mail and News browsing software and the Zeus BBS package. In both cases, opening up the windows will reveal an install icon. This will activate the Commodore Installer.

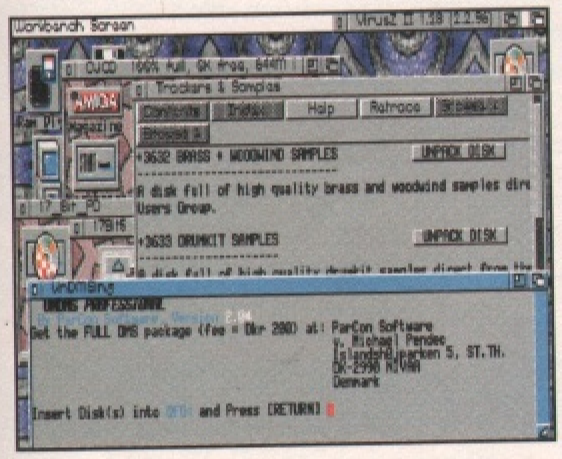
This drawer marked WWW is dedicated to to the World Wide Web. All you need do to check out this wonderful entity is to open the WWW drawer and click on the AWeb icon. Presuming that you have a GIF datatype installed on your Workbench or you booted from the CD then AWeb should fire up right away and you should see the CU Amiga banner. If you don't see the banner then enter the following commands in the AmigaDOS shell, hitting return after each line and being sure to get all the characters correct including spaces:



```
cd cucd:workbench/devs/datatypes/
copy #? Devs:DataTypes/
cd cucd:workbench/classes/datatypes/
Copy #? Sys:Classes/DataTypes/
```

After that, reboot your Amiga and try again. AWeb should now activate and display the CU Amiga 'home page' correctly. What you see is similar to AmigaGuide. You can scroll around the page and where any text is in blue, this is a link and you can click on this to move off to that location. Of course AmigaGuide doesn't give you pictures in the page either. We've compiled quite a collection of WW W pages for you to 'surf around' to give a taster of what you could experience with a WWW Browser on the Internet where there are millions of WWW pages all around the world and they can be navigated around in the same easy point and click fashion.

Further down the CU Amiga home page, you'll see a small index. The first 'link' is to the documentation for the demo WWW Browser you are using, AWeb. The second is some pages created by CU Amiga Magazine writer John Kennedy. John has included some of his previous articles. The third item is deceptively small for the material contained within. It's another CD preview but this time it's a CD entirely made up of HTML page – WWW encyclopedia. Daniel Amor kindly donated the Oceania pages to give a taster of this useful CD resource. Ordering information is contained in the pages.

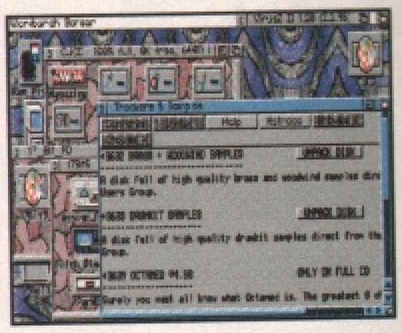


17_Bit_PD

Contents: 3 massive CD previews of top PD/Shareware collections. 17 Bit Phase 5, Nothing but GIFs and LSD 3.

Using the three 17 Bit Software CD previews is simple. For 17Bit5, just open the directory and double click on the Fifth_Dimension icon. An AmigaGuide document will appear. When you find your way to the listings of files, if the filename is an AmigaGuide button, the archive is present on CUCD and all you need to do is click on it to extract to floppy disk, RAD or any other floppy compatible device.

17BITGIF is a preview of the Nothing But GIFs CD. Simply click on the WELCOME icon. Each directory of pictures has a number of indexes to give you a quick impression of each picture. Just clicking on the index or the pictures will activate a viewer to display the picture. As with all the 17 Bit PD CD previews, if the filename is not an AmigaGuide button then the file is not present on CUCD but only on the full CD. Click on the 17bitad.iff icon in the 17_Bit_PD drawer for ordering information on the full version of the CDs.

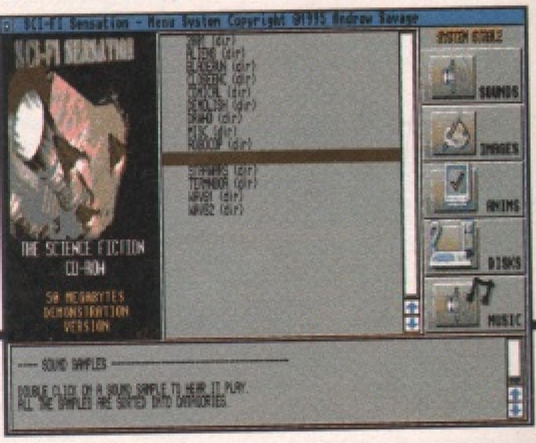


Epic

Contents: CD previews of Sci-Fi Sensations and Special-FX vol 1.

Within the Epic drawer is a CD Preview of Epic Marketing's Sci-Fi sensations and a preview slideshow of their Special-FX multimedia title. Unfortunately the Sci-Fi Sensations CD preview GUI front end won't work if you don't boot from the CD. This can be solved by performing the following line in the AmigaDOS Shell before activating Sci-Fi Sensations: `Assign Libs: CUCD:Libs ADD`

Enter this line exactly as show, complete with all the spaces and hit Return at the end. You can now exit the Shell. After entering the SCI-FI_SENSATIONv2 drawer, you'll need to click on the Click Me 1st icon and then the amiga_menu. If all has gone according to plan, a GUI interface should appear which will let you move around the various material and generally just click to view or hear the files.



Many thanks to ...

Though there's no icon, if you're interested in the trials and tribulations that our cover CD compiler Mat Bettinson went through during the making of CUCD, direct your text viewer to a text file in the root of CUCD called Mat.readme. Mat would like to thank all the people that provided the material, knowledge and support which enabled CUCD to come into being. CU Amiga Magazine hopes that a cover-mounted CD can become a regular event, so if you have any material for a future CD or some suggestions of what you'd like to see on the next CD, drop us a line. The Gigabyte hard drive is already reformatted for CUCD2. However, we're sure you'll still be discovering hidden wonders on CUCD when the next CD edition of CU Amiga Magazine hits a newsagent near you.

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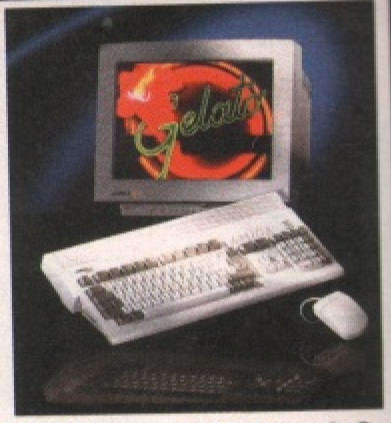
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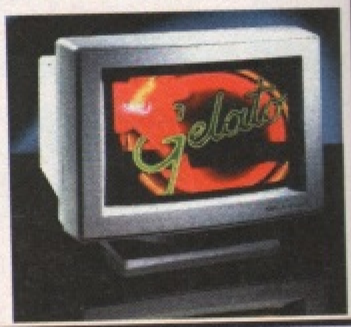
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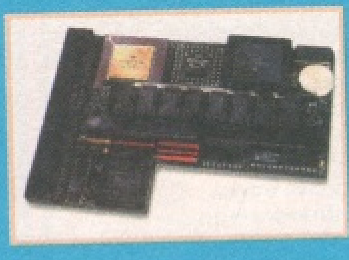
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cover disks

How to Load...



Cover disk 130

This month's 'technical' cover disk 130 will not autoboot. To access the programs you will first need to boot from your Workbench disk or your hard drive. See page 9 for instructions on installation and use of the software on disk 130.

Cover CD

The special CD edition of this month's CU Amiga Magazine comes with a full Amiga CD-ROM instead of floppy disks. Unlike the CD that came with the November 1995 issue, this CD has been designed to work with all Amigas with a CD-ROM drive and the CD32. You can boot directly from the CD by inserting it into the drive and resting the Amiga or CD32.

CD32 Notes

While this CD will boot up on a CD32, due to the limited resources of a standard CD32, not all of the software will be compatible. However, much of the software can be run directly from the CD. You will need a mouse and preferably a keyboard to get the most from the CD but you may find you can browse through the contents using the joypad controller.

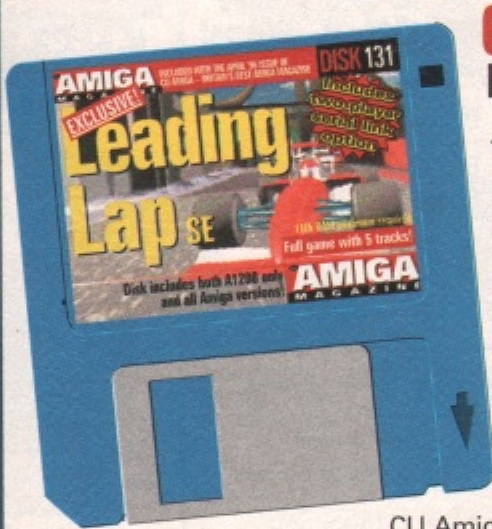
Accessibility

We wanted to make this CD as accessible as possible and so we decided to include most of the software in uncompressed form, ready to run straight from the CD wherever possible. Archives are used in some of the demos of commercial CDs, such as the 17 Bit Phase 5 drawer which contains a number of DMS files that need to be expanded to floppies. However, on the whole you'll find the software is ready to go with no messing around.

Anything you see that has an icon can be run, viewed, played or otherwise accessed by double clicking. In contrast, if you open a drawer and find a list of filenames with no icons, this is because they are data files which need to be loaded into some other application. The icon depicting a disk and three arrows is used for DMS archives. When you double click on these you'll be asked to insert blank disks into the internal floppy drive, onto which the programs will be expanded.

Hard drive users

If you decide to boot from your hard drive first, remember to double click the InitCD icon in the bottom right corner of the CD window. This will make sure the software knows where to look for all of its support files. Installing the software onto your hard drive is a simple enough job in most cases. If there is no hard drive installation icon for the software you want to install, read the documents in the relevant drawers for clues, and if all else fails, simply copy the contents of the drawer across to your hard drive. You may also need to copy some libraries from the Libs drawer of the CD to the Libs drawer of your hard drive.



Cover disk 131
Leading Lap

There are both A500 and A1200 versions on this disk. You will need to decompress either version to a separate single disk. This is a simple process. (1) Have a new, blank formatted disk close to hand and turn off your Amiga. (2) Write protect disk 131 and insert it into the internal drive. (3) Turn on your Amiga and wait until a CU Amiga loading screen appears. This will have two disk icons on it. (4) Follow the instructions to press either F1 or F2 to decompress either the AGA or standard version on Leading Lap to your blank disk. (5) Once all files have been decompressed onto the blank disk simply restart your machine with this disk in the drive and the game will start. Label this new disk "Leading Lap SE". Put disk 131 in a safe place in case of future failure.

IF YOUR DISK WON'T LOAD

We go to great trouble to ensure that the CU Amiga Magazine cover disks will work on common Amiga models. However, if you do experience problems follow this simple guide.

We also vigorously virus check our cover disks on a branded virus checker. If some escape our attention we cannot assume responsibility for it.

1: Remove all unnecessary upgrades and peripherals, such as printers and modems. Some trapdoor expansions can also cause problems.

2: Follow the instructions on this and previous pages exactly.

3: If you still experience problems loading the disk call the PCWyse helpline on 01685 350 505 between the hours of 10am and 12noon Monday to Friday.

If they advise that the disk is faulty, fill in your details in the form below, and send this form, along with the faulty cover disk and a 28p stamped self addressed envelope to:

CU Amiga Magazine Disk Returns, PCWyse Dowlais Top Business Park, Dowlais, Merthyr Tydfil, Mid Glamorgan CF48YY.

NAME: ....

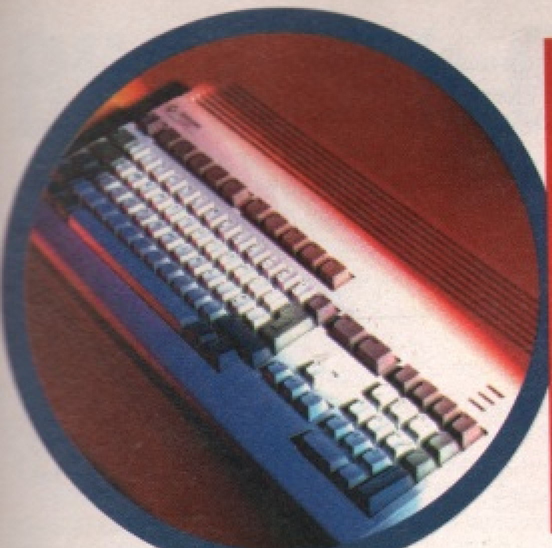
ADDRESS: ....

TYPE OF AMIGA OWNED: ....

DISK NUMBER: ....

DESCRIBE EXACTLY WHAT HAPPENS WHEN YOU TRY TO LOAD THE DISK:

....



News

AT Promises Future



After the dust had settled, we went to Amiga Technologies' new Stanstead office to speak to the man now in charge of the Amiga's fate in the UK. John Smith was positive and excited about future prospects and although disappointed that his staff had been decimated, he was undaunted by the task ahead. He believes that Amiga Technologies has enough genuinely new products on the way and enough serious development in hand to put the Amiga back on track. Chief among these in the short term is the Amiga Surfer Pack, which is due on sale this month for under £600 and contains a modem and ready to go Internet software on its standard hard drive. Because of its plug in and go capability he believes that this will appeal to a wider audience than the standard A1200 Magic Pack did. Here's what we asked and what he said:

■ Q Why did Amiga Technologies close down the Maidenhead Operation and lose so many staff?

■ A One thing that was always on the cards was that Maidenhead was going to be temporary. It was always our intention that we would use the strengths of our parent company Escom. Hence the end of January we moved. As far as the redundancies are concerned there are a mixture of things. First, some of the staff would simply not have relocated from Maidenhead to Stanstead, as it is a significant distance to travel. Couple this with the less than expected turnover that we got at Christmas and that's why we didn't bring all the staff here.

■ Q Do you think that the Amiga scene in Britain has been affected by the loss of so many staff?

■ A It's not good for anyone when you lose staff, I accept this. But at the end of the day one has to cut the cloth accordingly. You can see these premises, they're tremendous and I can rely on a lot of help from the [Escom] people here. I still have the back-up in Germany, who are beginning to take a more active role in publicity in the UK, and we're also going to do the show, which as you know we're sponsoring. What I'm saying is that we want the Amiga to move forward, we want it to have the desirability it's always had, and if this confidence has been dented slightly, well that's life. But it is my belief that with the excellent features that we've got planned [Surfer Pack, Q-Drive etc] that in the very near future the Amiga will start to get back into the public eye in the very near future, in the manner that we would all like it to be.

■ Q Is the UK market still viewed by the parent company as being an important market?

■ A Yes of course. They have been more proactive in the German market, as you said in your last month's issue, and certainly this paid off there. They're now starting to look at things here in the UK, and are doing the Amiga World Show to help motivate the user base in the UK. We really should be 50/50 with Germany. In real terms 80% of all Amiga business should be done between the UK and Germany, 40% each. By the end of this year this is what we believe we will be able to achieve.

■ Q What assurances can you give the UK reader of CU Amiga Magazine that Amiga Technologies isn't retreating from the UK market, that it still has a strong future in the UK?

■ A One thing is certain: 40% of Amiga Technologies' business can be done in the UK, and any businessman worth his salt would not want to lose an opportunity like that. It's going to take us time to get back to the dizzy heights though. Let's face it, at Commodore we had eight years of Amiga and that's a long time to develop a product. Irrespective of who's in charge in the UK the guys back in head office in Germany want to see the Amiga succeed here. This commitment will be shown by new products during 1996, like the Q-Drive and Surfer Pack which we are releasing and continued development this year and in 1997.

■ Q If Christmas didn't go as well as you expected, how do you view survival this summer?

■ A Very shortly we will be releasing the Q-Drive. We believe this sort of add on peripheral shows that we are very serious about our machine and this is the right time to launch it. You yourselves are producing a CD-ROM magazine and this proves it. We are also launching the Internet bundle called the Surfer Pack. These are the kind of products that show the strengths of the Amiga. They show its variety and they show its professionalism. We know it's a good games machine, but we also know that it has so much else to offer and this is the long term message we want to get across.

■ Q We've always criticised the relaunched Amiga for not being powerful enough. In between PowerPC and the current machines do you still have plans for an upgraded A1300?

■ **A** Well, Amiga Technologies in Germany are working towards an 030 based machine. We want to produce an Amiga which falls in between the 020 A1200 and the bigger A4000Ts. Remember that the arrival date for the PowerPC Amiga is spring 1997, and that's without any slippage [a nice way of saying delayed]. No, we want to see the product strengthened and we have plans.

■ **Q Will it have a CD-ROM drive and Hard Drive?**

■ **A** I don't want to give too much information away at the moment because nothing is set in concrete. I would say a hard drive is necessary, and a CD-ROM drive should be an option, as it is with the current A1200. We have big hopes for the Q-Drive, as I have said this is the way the market is developing.

■ **Q But software developers need to know whether it will have these facilities or not so that they can develop for it.**

■ **A** We will renew our efforts to talk to software houses and I personally have already had some positive advances.

■ **Q When will we see the A4000T in the UK?**

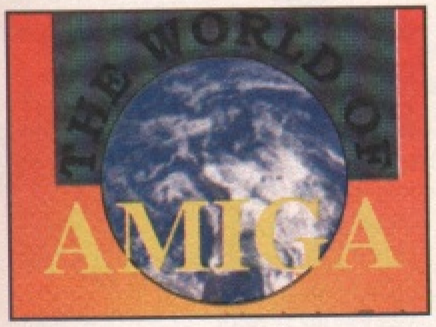
■ **A** We had the first significant shipment of A4000Ts last week (mid February) into Anglo/SDL. In time we will get more fluid supplies. I don't know all the reasons for its delay but one of them certainly is the CE mark. I know they had to make a few minor tweaks to get the machine to conform the the EC's new strict regulations.

(CE stands for controlled emissions. As of 1st of January all new products sold in the European Community must conform to very strict radiation emission standards. These apply to all peripherals attachable to the machine as well as the unit itself. The testing is expensive and lengthy. Because the A4000T was largely US developed, this had to be undergone before it could be sold here.)

Silent Paws Update

If you saw our article on the Silent PAWS laptop Amiga in the February 1996 issue, and were interested, then the World Of Amiga show in Novotel on April 13th, 14th could be the place to go. Sources in America have claimed that Shawn Ralph, the machine's developer is hoping to demonstrate one of the prototypes here in the UK during the show to gauge potential in Europe. If this is the case it will be the first time the machine has been displayed outside North America since its inception. Although expensive, it does provide Amiga on the move capability. The A1200 version of the computer seemed bulky from the photos we saw: the A600 version was much more PC laptop in size. As far as we can see the best way forward for this machine has to be to go as small as possible. This means either a custom motherboard has to be designed or, in the short term, to possibly use the comparatively tiny CD32 motherboard, with an SX32 (see page 66) daughterboard. This is what we'll be putting to Silent PAWS if they turn up. Why not join us?

A World of New Kit



The World Of Amiga show in April seems set to be the launch pad for a whole range of new Amiga products.

Not only will Amiga Technologies have their Surf Pack and the Q-Drive on display (at long last), they'll hopefully also have the first UK A4000Ts and possibly news on PowerPC and the new Workbench.

From other developers the news is just as good with HiSoft working like mad to display their Surf Squirrel and Squirrel MPEG. Both of these are set to to take the Amiga by storm like HiSoft's original Squirrel did last year. HiSoft will also be demonstrating the Terminate TCP (which has Mat Bettinson in a sweat already) and add ons for the superb Cinema 4D from Maxon.

Also displaying new products, including last month's highly rated Wordworth 5, will be Digita. Digita will have the cut down SE version of WW5 on display for Amigas with just 2Mb and a single disk drive, alongside Organiser 2 and Datastore 2.

The Organisers of World Of Amiga haven't got a full list of exhibitors for the show just yet, but Power Computing, Silica, Harwoods and other hardware retailers and developers are all expected to take part.

Booking for the show is available on the following phone number: 01369 706346.

For more information see the advertisement on page 95.

We'd like to wish the show all the support it deserves. We intend to be there, so we hope to meet you there. Let's keep the Amiga alive and support this show.

Oh Lordy! Its Valhalla 3

"It's a bird", "it's a plane", "it's a door", aggh! Those samples again! The notorious Valhalla series, with its high and low pitched sample voices, its holes in the floor and its none too logical puzzles was a source of constant amusement, despair and argument here in the office. You either loved the game or hated it – there was no middle ground. But enough people out there must have loved the original and its follow-up The Lord Of Infinity, because a new version, Valhalla And The Fortress Of Eve is on its way.

The game will follow the fortunes of the young prince of the original game and promises more of the same in terms of gameplay and even more sampled text. Indeed, for those sick of the samples Vulcan is now incorporating a full text only option. The new game will be sold at Vulcan's good value direct-from-publisher Mini Series price of £14.99. Contact Vulcan Software on 01705 670269.



Worms, Worms and More Worms

Team 17 have announced that they intend doing an AGA upgrade for Worms to take advantage of the A1200's superior graphics display system. It will be more colourful and the variety of levels will be greater than in the original version. Although the game engine will remain the same the update disks will fall into the £15 bracket and so will still be top value for Worms nuts we reckon. It's due to arrive around the end of March, at the same time as Alien Breed 3DII: The Killing Grounds. Call Team 17 on 01924 267776 for more details.

Blittersoft have also announced a Worms CD packed with hundreds of custom levels levels, samples and speed updates. It's due in mid March, so watch their ads for details. Blittersoft are available on 01908 261466.



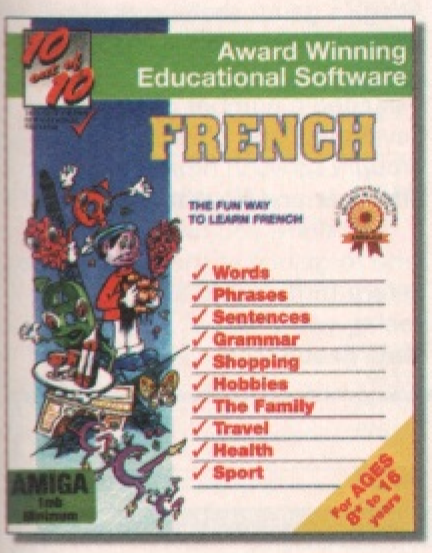
Blittersoft Go Hard

Blittersoft have announced a new range of hardware and software products for the Spring. These include new tower casings for the A500, A1200, A3000 and A4000 ranges. Equipped with Zorro II and III, PCI slots and other expansion features they will pitch in competition with both the Micronik Tower and Hi-Q's Power Stations (see page 77), for expanding users existing systems. Because of the provision of PCI slots Blittersoft are claiming that PC boards will be available for the tower systems giving you both an Amiga and a PC in the one case, unlike Hi-Q's Siemese Twin system which uses a separate standalone PC and SCSI unit connected via a Squirrel to a standard A1200.

Blittersoft have also announced that they've taken over the distribution of Canadian company AsimWare Innovations CD-ROM software. The products concerned are AsimCDFS 3.0, a control program for CD-ROM drives with PhotoCD, music control and sampling and CD32/CDTV emulation and MasterISO, an Amiga specific CD-ROM mastering program. Call Blittersoft on 01908 261466.

Guildhall Educational

Guildhall Leisure has taken over distribution of 10 out of 10 Educational software. 10 out of 10 produce educational products for both Amiga disk and CD-ROM for ages 3-16. These include subjects like Maths, History, Geography and a narrow range of languages including French, German and, of course, English. Up to date national curriculum is claimed. For more information contact Guildhall Leisure on 01032 890000.



PageStream 2.2SE

Emerald are doing an offer on PageStream 2.2SE, which makes it available for £49.95. Those not already equipped with this superb package should investigate it now.

Upgrades to version 3.0 from this version will be available soon. Emerald can be contacted on 0181 715 8866.

NFA Reply

Last month on Public Domain utilities page we ran an article on some suspected pirate numbers and BBSes on a disk that we'd received from NFA and asked them to contact us. We promptly received a phone call from NFA and asked them to send in their reply so here it is:

"I'm sorry you feel NFA are a bunch of pirates. Due to the article you wrote the morale of several members of the group has been seriously damaged.

"The vast majority of NFA members are very much against piracy. There will always be a pirate element in a group no matter how hard you try to keep it clean.

"We do not promote pirate BBS sites. There may be members in the group who are currently trading pirate software. If there are I would ask them to contact our UK HQ for a chat.

Since publication of your article I have received several calls from people trying to obtain "warze" from our main distribution site.

"The last thing I need sitting on my hard drive in the morning is copyright material.

"I really do not have a lot more to say on the subject, I will be extra careful in future, as when I checked my system there were several archives with cracked keyfiles that I had not checked properly (which were promptly removed). All I can say is that we do try to keep the group legal and will continue to do so."
Signed NFA management.

Stateside

The North American scene of late has been one of cautious optimism, with the Amiga Atlanta 10th Anniversary Banquet as a high and the shutdown of a large Amiga company a low. Let me explain.... writes **Jason Compton**

The Amiga Atlanta user group's party brought Amigans from across the country to the Terrace Garden Inn in fashionable Buckhead, Atlanta,Georgia. The meal was standard-issue banquet chicken but the conversation was all Amiga. The banquet brought in faces from the group's past and present, just as it brought in luminaries from the Amiga's history. Dale Luck and RJ Mical from the original Amiga Corporation kept the audience entertained with tales of the design of the original chips, the legendary joyboard that spawned Guru Meditation, and their own experiences with Commodore. Legends of the industry Dave Haynie and Fred Fish addressed the crowd on their exploits, and I myself was asked to give a piece on the Amiga's future. But there wasn't anything I could say that the audience couldn't see for themselves, particularly when you take into account who was in the audience.

Motorola sent a PR contingent, complete with a PowerPC604 machine (running Windows NT, but they were at least fairly apologetic about this) and loads of consumer and developer goodies to give away. Newtek also sent close to a dozen people, including company president Tim Jenison, who capped off the evening with a rallying speech about the future of the Amiga and his personal confidence in Amiga Technologies' management.

The future isn't what it used to be for Canada's Wonder Computers, who as you may recall from our last issue had just come off of two store openings in the summer and the successful World of Amiga Toronto show. Unfortunately Wonder's accounts were called in by their bank and the company is presently in bankruptcy proceedings. It is the hope of Wonder CEO Mark Habinski that he will be able to raise enough capital to re-purchase the assets from the bankrupt Wonder and form a new corporation. While the North American market itself will be able to sustain the (at best) stall in Wonder's operations and would survive (at worst) its failure to return, it has been a blow to customers who relied on their service, as well as retailers who not only relied on their business, but have considerable accounts and merchandise behind Wonder's locked doors.

In the face of AmiTCP's recent move to commercialism and the release ofI-Net 225 (and its subsequent bundling with Amiga Technologies' Surferpack), Oregon Research is moving ahead with its plans to release a competing networking system. Dubbed Termite TCP after their popular terminal program, Termite's release date and price are as of yet unknown. At the same time, US-headquartered developers, Omnipresence, seem to be close to sealing a publishing deal for their IBrowse Web browsing software. While a firm statement was not available at the time of press, latest reports from Omnipresence management indicate that HiSoft of the UK will get the nod.

25p A Megabyte

As well as announcing that they too will be selling the SX32, Eyetech of North Yorkshire are currently promoting a hard drive and multimedia authoring kit based around Optonica's MMe Experience kit. The Hard Drive is a slimline 3.5 inch unit that Eyetech claim will need no modifications to the standard A1200 to install. It's a 1.083 Gigabytes (over 1000Mb!) model and should be enough for most multimedia applications. The drive, an installed registered copy of MMe and other shareware and PD utilities comes at £229.95. For more information contact Eyetech on 01642 713185.



Matt Broughton's



Games in view

Same old picture I'm afraid, but that's what happens when you go off on holiday and it snows continually. Still, at least I had the Amiga games scene to look forward to on my return.

Hello and welcome. Now you may remember me threatening to gloat at you following a recent trip to New York but considering the fact that it rained and snowed for the entire time, it hardly seems worth it. You'll no doubt also be glad to hear that on returning from my trip, I contracted pneumonia and spent the following weeks locked in a small room with only a large duvet for company. Still, at least I'm alive.

Let's start with some positive stuff. Time, I feel, to catch up with the game that I've been looking forward to since before we sold The One (grrr, grrr!) Yep, **Blitz Bombers** is still on its way, and baring a bit of legal 'calm down, calm down!' between the **Leading Edge** boys and 'another company' – who are a bit worried about the similarity between Blitz Bombers and one of their major titles – it should be with us within the next two months.

The company in question aren't actually being very difficult at all, and with any luck, the most it'll mean to the final game will be a possible change to the look of the main 'bomber' character.

Another interesting twist to the tale (according to 'Mr PhD' himself, 'Dr Nigel' Hughes) is that one of the gang recently found a load of music on an Aminet CD that they'd previously been presented by THEIR musical man under the pretence of it being his original work! I know – some people will try anything! Still, a couple of the actual composers have already been contacted and it looks as though the end result of this particular problem will just involve writing a couple of new level tunes.

Other than that, everything has come along wonderfully since we last looked, with a one-player game element having been implemented, where each level has a 'goal' as well as baddies to kill. It's all pretty simple stuff like collecting keys and finding the exit, but should add to the longevity as a single-player game.

Future projects from the boys also look pretty interesting, with a decent 3D Blitz Bomber engine already doing the rounds – giving the game we know and love a more **Gloom**-like perspective.

One problem with this has come from not being able to see bombs around corners, but the team are hoping to compensate for this with clever use of lighting effects to 'give the bombs away' as well as the possibility of being able to see the tops of bombs from a distance. Interesting stuff, non?

The only other major foreseeable problem is that, while a split-screen is possible, there's no way we can expect a four-way cut. This will probably lead to further developments in the one-player game design.

And finally from the boys, having written so many Blitz applications for themselves during the writing of Blitz Bombers, there's now a good chance that they'll be making some of their programmes available to the public. Look out for Blitz support software in the near future.

Even more good news. Do you remember **Legends**? If you don't let me recap. **Krisalis** planned to release this promising RPG but shelved. Well, it looks like **Guildhall Leisure** will be releasing it soon. So we've got that to look forward to.

Another snippet of good news is that despite the recent disappearance of softco **Rasputin**, top-fun platformer **Ruffian** will still be getting a release – albeit one through mail order – complete with a couple of tweaks such as new and improved music, improved level designs, and the facility to customise the main controls. Hurrah.

There is a demo of the updated version of Ruffian on the CD-ROM covermounted on the CD edition of this magazine. So if you have the CD-ROM edition cheers, if not you'll have to wait a bit.

Some sad news though. This week, however, sad news concerning **21st Century**. Yes, though we've been seeing each other for quite some while now, the spark has gone from our relationship, and they've just rung to say that they need a bit of time and space to think things over.

My gut feeling, however, is that they're about to chuck us. So it's back down the games disco to try and pick up a new chick, but at least there's still **Slam Tilt** to look forward to before the big heave-ho.

It would appear that the only games we're likely to see from the 21st-erers in the future would be budget releases of old games – and even that would more likely than not be processed through an affiliated label such as **Hit Squad** or **KIXX.** Still we'll wait and see. How many times have we heard that from companies only for them to come back onto the games scene with an Amiga game just a few months later.

A particularly unfortunate bit of news this month, comes from long-time Amiga supporters, **Kompart,** where the loss of the **Blue Byte** label (early last year) appears to have done more damage in the longrun than they realised, with the company going into voluntary liquidation.

Kompart have proved extremely important to the Amiga's game scene over the past year, especially with its publishing arm, **Black Legend**, who managed a number of European developers and ultimately brought us such hits as **Tactical Manager** and **Football Glory**.

And there you have it – just time to glance at the HMV charts before turning into a pizza. Be seeing you... ■

Matt Broughton

HMV GAMES
Amiga Top 10

No	TITLE	PUBLISHER
1	Sensi World of Soccer 95/96	Virgin
2	Worms	Ocean
3	Player Manager 2: Extra Time	Virgin
4	Alien Breed 2	Ocean
5	Super Stardust	Ocean
6	Project X	Ocean
7	Kid Chaos	Ocean
8	Fantasy Manager 95/96	Hit Squad
9	Ultimate Soccer Manager	Daze
10	PGA European Tour Golf	Electronic Arts

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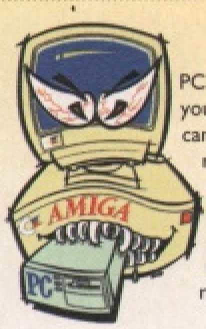
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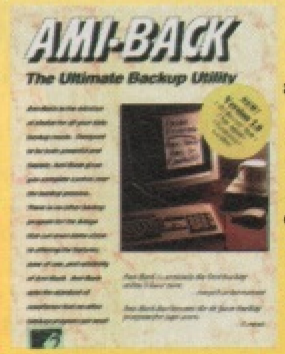
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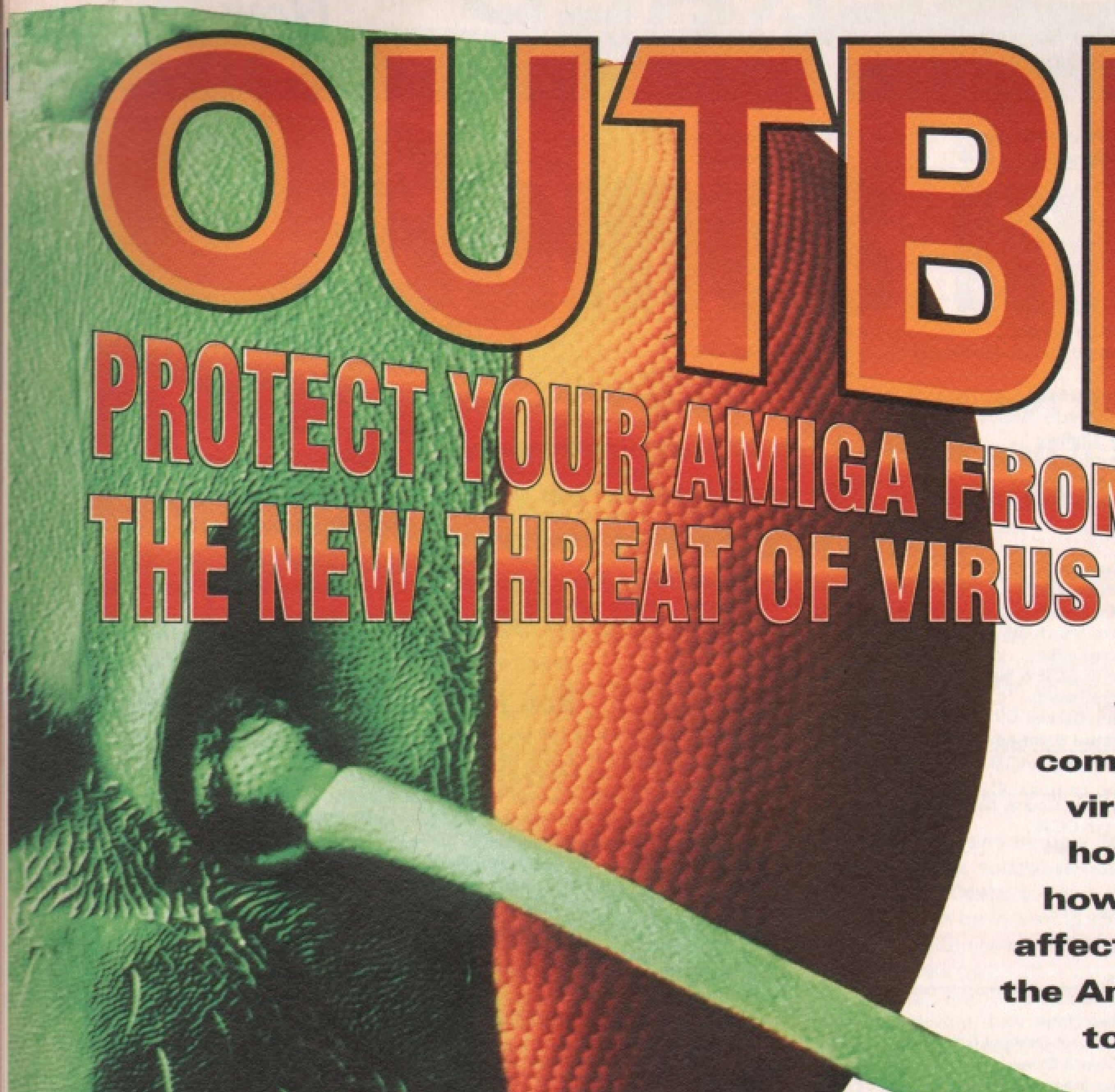
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OUTBRE

PROTECT YOUR AMIGA FROM THE NEW THREAT OF VIRUS ATTACK ...



With new technology comes a new threat from viruses. We explore just how big is the problem, how has new technology affected its penetration of the Amiga market and how to protect against it ...

Years ago viruses were rife on floppy disks but the amount of damage they caused was largely limited. A hard reset would solve most problems on a floppy disk based system as the viruses could only thrive on disk or in RAM. Now though, hard drives are increasingly commonplace, CD-ROMs come with 650Mb of files and the 'net is a gigantic breeding ground. The amount of damage to be caused has multiplied.

A virus can be a big problem, or it can be an insignificant one. In a worst case scenario, it can destroy your software collection, re-format your hard drive and even potentially damage a video monitor. Plenty of scare stories abound and newspapers love to run half-fact half-myth stories and this high tech scourge is ideal press fodder.

Although viruses were big news on Amiga some years ago it's now other systems that are being targeted. Even Bill Gates' new 'safe' operating system Windows '95 was soon at risk; suddenly word processing documents began to act independently and databases lost their data.

What is a virus?

For those new to, or unfamiliar with the term, don't panic. A virus is not alive, it's only a computer program. However, that's not to say it's not dangerous – or even that it doesn't exhibit life-like symptoms. For example, like a real life virus, a virus computer program replicates itself at every opportunity, writing copies of itself to every disk it comes into contact with. Each of these copies is the same as the original, and will continue to try spreading like wildfire.

Some viruses hide in the boot sectors of floppy disks. The boot sectors are special because when the Amiga is reset and a floppy disk present, it automatically loads in these boot sectors and runs the data they contain as a program. Normally this program triggers the loading of the Workbench or loads a game, but if a virus is stored there, it will be loaded into memory and executed. As the Amiga is an excellent multitasking system it can lurk for ages, waiting for a new disk to be inserted so it can copy itself to its bootsector. This is how they spread.

If the newly inserted disk is a game with a custom bootblock, the virus can overwrite it and therefore make the

AK!

game useless.

Unfortunately a virus can do even more damage: some are programmed to perform various nasty acts after a certain amount of time. Some viruses will corrupt or format a hard disk for example, some will put up irritating messages on the screen or make the mouse pointer vanish.

A bit sneaky

Some strains of virus don't require booting though and can sneak into your system in various other ways. Some disguise themselves as normal programs in your c: directory, some misuse the operating system's disk validation system.

The most common way in which viruses used to be spread was through pirated games and demo disks – disks which needed to be booted. Often, users would perform a warm reset (Control-Amiga-Amiga) after loading a demo or game and then pop in a disk to do something else: instant infection. It has also been known for a virus to pop up on magazine cover disks: I was caught out once with the Saddam virus when compiling a disk for an Amiga magazine (not this title, of course) about four years ago. It was an unpleasant experience, I can promise you.

On the 'net

With the rise and rise of comms in general and the Internet in particular, the opportunities for viruses to spread is ever greater. The Aminet is the definitive Amiga software site on the Internet – if you upload a program there, it can be used by thousands of users all over the world in hours. Needless to say that the keepers of Aminet make stringent anti-virus tests. Bulletin Boards are an excellent source of software, but can also be potential risks. Many boards cater for a variety of machines, and many are run on a PC. The PC sysops may not have the tools at his disposal to check Amiga format uploads for nasty extras, so be extra careful when using download programs. DMS files are risky, as they contain a snapshot of an entire disk, including the bootblock data.

On disks

CU Amiga Magazine tests its disks thoroughly with Anti Virus software every month and it's just as well. Although people who supply us with software for disks have no idea whatsoever that they are carrying a virus, some of them do. This is easily controlled with standard disks, though you do have to make sure that you have proper up to date software to check for brand new viruses. But with CD-ROMs it can turn into a nightmare. Although Mat checked the contents of this month's CD-ROM (see special edition magazines) as each component was put on the disc, when it was fully compiled another check revealed two viruses: 'Ebola' and 'Happy New Year 1996'.

VirusChecker, the program Mat normally uses to check for them did not discover these, but after having some minor problems with various files he checked the disc with Virus Z, (on this month's disk) and there they were. At this stage they had infected several hundred files, multiplying like wildfire. Virus Z located and recovered most of the files, clearing up the infection.

Luckily Ebola and Happy New Year 1996 are not dangerous, they are not intended to do any harm, only to inflate the egos of their creators. But because of the way they were programmed they caused hang ups or gurus in some of the items on the disk. However they could have been worse. The trick is to use the most up-to-date software and even try running your disks through more than one virus checker, just to make sure. It's a timely coincidence that we were running this feature at exactly the same time as we discovered these viruses: we're always vigilant with our disks and haven't had any problems for nearly a year before this.

Good news

The good news is that clearly, the virus threat has diminished from a few years ago, when every magazine Q&A postbag was full of distraught users asking why their disks had been re-named 'Lazarus' (a perfect example of how a non-existent virus got the blame). Raising the awareness of users and good anti-virus tools have made a difference and virus related disasters are

Free love, Safe Hex

Safe Hex International (SHI) are an international group, dedicated to trying to stop the spread of computer viruses. In their own words, SHI is a grass roots movement, started in 1987 with Amiga computers. Today they are an organisation with around 600 members, who are all more or less involved with the project. It's a non-profit making organisation and their motto is 'Safe Hex'. The facilities they provide include a virus bank containing more than 1800 Amiga and PC viruses for supporting good shareware antivirus programs (helping people get money lost by virus infection back by programming anti virus products) and releasing the newest and the best virus killers around from well known programmers worldwide. There are more than 35 PC and Amiga 'Virus Centers' worldwide where you can get virus help by phoning their Hotline, or by contacting them on the SHI World Wide Web site at http://www.aalborges.dk/~i1g/SHI.HTM



What they say:

"Personally I have only ever caught two viruses and these were both before I was on the net. However,r having said that, I normally always have the latest version of VirusChecker running in the background, unless I do a minimum boot, which is usually only to run LightWave, and definitely no Net access, as Rexx and Amitcp are not started either. I think most legitimate ftp sites run careful checks on all uploaded software, aminet certainly does ..."
Laurie
(A Usenet user)

"The only problem I have had with a virus was when my parents brought back some pirated software from Singapore. It was a Saddam virus which was fairly easy to get rid of with VirusChecker. I tend not to rush off and get the latest version of a software release as soon as it appears and I also limit myself to Aminet. I know that corrupted software has appeared on Aminet but they seem to be pretty good at removing it when it's pointed out to them."
Ian
(A Usenet user)

relatively uncommon today.

In a perverse way the lack of new Amiga viruses can actually be seen to be a bad sign about the state of the Amiga. No-one is praising virus programmers, but the fact that most have turned their attentions to the PC is indicative that the Amiga is not as 'hip' as it once was. Let's just hope that when things start rolling again we will leave virus writers behind.

Don't get complacent though. As mass storage media and the 'net take off on the Amiga it the threat is still ever present. As 'Happy New Year 96' proves there are still people out there programming them. An even bigger threat lurks on old disks and untested programs from BBS systems. It can only take one virus on a disk you forgot to test to infect your entire collection, and potentially wipe out years of work. Be vigilant!

How to prevent an attack

The best cure is not to catch a virus in the first place and the only way to be safe is to leave your Amiga switched off and never insert a new floppy disk in the drive or use a modem. But hey, it's not an ornament! Everybody uses disks and a lot use modems, so here are some handy hits for safer hex.

- Don't touch pirated software. Not only is pirating software illegal and damaging to the Amiga market as a whole, but it is the prime way in which viruses are spread.
- Use the most up-to-date Virus software you can find. Use it frequently. If you have a hard drive, keep it running all the time.
- Be especially careful about using public domain or shareware software you have downloaded yourself. Test the files with a virus checker
- When using a hard drive you may want to deactivate it when using software you are wary of. You can do this from the boot-up menu (hold down the two mouse buttons).
- Make regular back-ups. Be careful to make several generations of back-ups in case you unwittingly back up infected files and overwrite your older (but un-infected) back-up.
- Keep the write protect tabs on your floppies open to stop anything writing to your disks without your knowledge.
- Switch your Amiga off between games, and keep the power off for at least 30 seconds to make sure nothing is left lurking in memory.
- If you use electronic mail, beware of warning messages about certain viruses (for example, Good Times) asking you to spread the word. In this case, it's the idea of the warning message itself which is the virus as it is spread around the world by worried users keen to warn their friends. ■

John Kennedy

Recommended anti-virus programs

These programs make use of the special SHI anti-virus libraries, and are therefore recommended. You can obtain them from the Aminet (either the Internet version, the CD-ROMs or any BBS which keeps the CD-ROMs on-line) or from public domain libraries.

- **Virus Checker by Johan Veldthuis**
- **Virus Scanner by Gabriele Greco**
- **Fides Professional by John Lohmeyer**
- **Fides Checker by John Lohmeyer**
- **DMS by Michael Pendec, ParCon Software**
- **D-Copy by Stefan Bernbo**
- **X-Xopy by Cachet Software (commercial)**
- **Disk Ute Copy by Alchemy Software.**
- **Xtruder (a BBS!) virus killer by Martin Wulffeld**
- **Harboot virus analyser by Martin Harbo**
- **Bootwriter by Ralf Thanner**
- **MT-Copy by Gert-Jan Strik**

What they say:

Chris Wiles of Active Software (CD retailer and 'net enthusiast)

Q Are Amiga viruses as big a worry as they were?

A Not really – the 'hype' or worry that surfaced with virus problems has died in the last two years. Beginners and new users always worry, however. They imagine that a virus has entered a disk when they encounter a problem – be it a read/write error, non-dos disk or simply the fact that a program is not installed correctly.

There is very little chance of finding a virus. Probably about one in every 1000 disks you bought may have a virus, maybe less.

Despite general opinions, major Public Domain libraries are usually very virus-free. Simply because programs are checked by BBSes, the Internet, submitters and then the library that receives them.

There are two ways of preventing virus attack: 1. Always keep you write-protect tab UP on a floppy disk 2. Keep a virus checker in your WBStartup drawer on bootup

Q Has the Internet made any difference?

A There are very few virus problems on the Aminet – not sure about the Internet in general. The guys behind the Aminet and the Aminet CD's (and, indeed most CD's!!) check and double-check every file for every kind of virus. There will be problems on the Internet - but if you take the recommended precautions – you will be safe.

Q Does fewer new viruses mean that the Amiga is doing badly as a computer?

A I think that the Amiga has 'had it's day' from virus makers. Most are corrupt individuals who like to attack the masses. They target business users, console makers etc. I believe 'they' would love to get a uncontrollable virus into a console game, mass market PC game etc ... once it has installed to your hard drive then the destruction starts.

The Amiga is much more an enthusiasts model at the moment. In the future this may change with the 're-invention' of the OS and main CPU (RISC), but for now PC is the target.

Q Have CD-ROM compilations made the threat of viruses better or worse?

A Bizarrely a mixture of both. Better as there is generally much more control. As stated before, the Aminet CD's (as an example) are tested and re-tested for viruses, so the chance of finding a virus on one of those CD's will be minimal. It has made it worse due to the fact there are SO many files present on the CD and therefore increases the chance of finding a virus.

For instance, if a company decided to throw together a games CD in record time (i.e. started in August for October release) they will not have time to test the CD properly, never mind test and re-test for viruses. That could be a worry.

There are many smaller companies trying to jump on the CD bandwagon as quickly as possible – my message is just make sure your CD's are as free from viruses as possible.

Here are some examples of viruses on Amiga

ABCAEK/Odie-CC
W/MicroMaster
AIDS
HIVAlien
New Beat
ASS Virus Protector
Bamiga
Sector
Belgium
BGS9
BGS9-Mutant
Big BossBlackflash
Blade Runners
BLFBlizzard
Butonic
Byte Bandit
ErrorByte
Parasite
Byte Parasite
Byte Voyager
Byte Warrior
CCCP
Centurion
Centurion
DenizDestructor
Dirty Tricks
Disaster Master
Disaster
Gadaffi
Glasnost
Sachsen
Saddam Hussein
Scarface
Sinister Syndicate
Logo
StarFire/NorthStar
Australian Parasite
The Incognito
Warsaw X-Copy

Wallace &

in The right computer

Nick Park's latest Wallace and Gromit animation has won yet another host of awards. The Amiga helped make it possible. (We're so proud.)

What do the Crunchie Ad, Frank the Tortoise and the superb Wallace and Gromit animations all have in common? Apart from the fact that the all came from the Aardman Animations stable, they were all done on the Amiga. Not a lot of people know that. We spoke to Glenn Hall, Aardman Animations' Technical Director to find out more.

> **'It is the Animator's first choice. We will stay with the Amiga just as long as we can keep them going.'**

Q When did you get involved in work on the Wallace and Gromit series?

A In 1986. Nick Park, had joined Aardman from the National Film School, and was trying to get his film finished. Peter Lord and David Sproxton, far sighted folk that they are, let Nick finish his film in the studios. It took another three years, and in the end A Grand Day Out was finished, and subsequently got an Oscar nomination. That year, also brought the studio its first Oscar for Creature Comforts.

Q What role does Nick Park have in putting his work together and does he have much influence over your work in the making of the Wallace and Gromit films?

A In the production of the recent film A Close Shave, Nick led a whole team of animators. He wrote the script with Bob Baker, the Bristol based writer who famously invented K9 in Dr Who, and drew the storyboard. He oversaw every single model, animated a huge amount of it all himself, and spent loads of precious time helping the other animators to get the look of the film the same all the way through. For Nick it is total involvement, and I as long as I have known and worked with him, I have never known him loose his cool. He is a great guy to work for, and when he and Peter Lord work together, really exciting things happen.

Yes he has influence, in the same way that all the animators in the studio do. It is very important that the equipment and ways of working are driven by the animators themselves, so I spend a lot of time finding out what they want, and how they want it to work, then we try to make it happen.



Gromit





Q So what equipment do you use then?

A We use Amiga 4000s with 230Mb HDD and 6Mb RAM. We also use Microvitec 1438 monitors and have standardised them for all our computers including PCs and some Apple Macintoshes. The crucial piece of equipment is the Personal Animation Recorder from Digital Processing Systems. We also use Directory Opus and Sunrise 19.

Also, we've modified the Panasonic AVE series frame by fitting our own set of remote controls, the Digipod. These allow the controls to be very robust so they can be actually placed on the set.

Q Why did you decide to use Amigas?

A After testing various systems, we found that the DPS Personal Animation Recorder on the Amiga worked best for us. It has its origins as a render store for LightWave and the newTek toaster, and as such was a unique combination. It was very cost effective and available. Before we chose the PAR we also tried out similar products on the Mac. We had the very first Digital Film from SuperMac Technologies and we also bought a Radius Video Vision studio, which we still use and have just updated. The PAR is different as it is essentially a hardware product, and the video system sits entirely above the computer bus.This means that the attached PAL video monitor gives a full screen picture. We use two cards, both from DPS. The first is a capture card AD 350, which usefully will also fit an ISA BUS PC, this connects via its own CVE cable (component video exchange) to the PAR card itself. The capture card has excellent quality video, can handle composite, S video and beta video. A full set of processor amps gives total control over the signal and the PAR is connected directly to an associated hard disc which can support two IDE drives. This system can thus grab video in real time, store it in full colour and give immediate replay. Handily, the software control can support single frame grabbing, and this is the mode we use.

The hard bit for us came when Commodore hit problems. We have bought every new system we could get our hands on, and a fair few secondhand, including an old A3000 that

Who the hell does Glenn Hall think he is? A right Aardman

Many thanks to Glenn Hall who after several attempts to avoid being blown up whilst attending recent Government programme in London took time out to answer these questions.

So How did he get involved in all of this?

"I started in electronic engineering, working mainly in theatre and television lighting and control systems, including the first computer controlled lighting systems. This took me into the area of working in manufacturing and designing lighting equipment, and thus into process control for theatre and manufacturing. Around this time I was lucky enough to work on feature film special effects, including some Pink Panther films. 1980 brought me to Bristol, where I joined the Drama Department at University of Bristol, where I taught stage lighting and theatre crafts, and then one day I met David Sproxton from Aardman Animations. I was doing a fair amount of freelance work then, including film work and Aardman made a commercial, their first, featuring dancing bones to make a computer keyboard. They rented the University theatre in the long summer break to shoot the commercial. I got involved and this led to my working on the seminal pop video for Peter Gabriel, Sledgehammer. Believe it or not that was shot in six days, with the wide angle scenes shot at the university theatre. After that I joined Aardman full time in 1986, with a brief to extend the use of motion control and computers in the film making process. Next up was the creation of the famous skeleton for the Scotch Video Tape, which saw Aardman working with Bill Mather, who went on amongst other wondrous spots, to create those dancing milk bottles."

The programme Glenn was attending, Information Society Initiative, is being set up by the government to help small and medium sized companies get the best benefits from the new IT and trading on e World Wide Web. The government have put £35 million behind this and Aardman Animations is featured as one of the five case studies to show how IT has worked for them. We will be doing a feature on this soon, meanwhile you can find out more on http://www.isi.dti.gov.uk



Oscar, oscar

Aardman Animations was formed in 1972, by two schoolkids David Sproxton and Peter Lord. Their home made animations were spotted by a BBC TV producer who promptly gave them a spot on Vision On. From here they developed the unforgettable Morph series. The company grew and grew and, now based in Bristol, has won numerous awards. There are too many to mention here but some of its most noted successes include the Creature Comforts, Crunchie ad, Sledgehammer video, Lurpak ads (little man with trombone) and the infamous Wallace and Gromit series: A Grand Day Out, The Wrong Trousers and A Close Shave.

At the recent BAFTA awards, held in London in February of this year, A Close Shave won a host of awards including: best film over fifteen minutes, best scenario, public choice award for favourite film and public choice award for funniest film.

still does good duty. We also have a few that are PC based – we had to do this when we just couldn't get any Amigas.

Q How does an animation get from being just an idea to animated picture?

A Well it starts off with a script and then taking that script through to a storyboard. We look at the ideas to see how it can be done. When the storyboard is done, and has been agreed upon with the advertising agency (if it is a commercial), then the modelmakers and set builders start work. The technical team begin work on special rigs to hold the models, or to move pieces. Sometimes I make computer controlled systems to link the whole thing together. Most of our work involves motion control, using computer based systems to move the camera, and this has to be done in small sections. Extra systems, often based around Toshiba PLCs (Programmable Limit Controllers) are used to keep everything in synch.

A voice track is recorded and this is broken down into phonetics by a film editor. The animators use this as a guide to get the lip synch right. The camera department assembles all the equipment and tests it, then the camera assistant on the job will do a final film test on the set before the shoot starts properly.

Q Where does the Amiga come in?

A We set up a model and view it with a Mitchell 35mm camera which is fitted with CCD video assist. We grab a single frame into a Panasonic frame store then grab a frame into the PAR. Then we move the model and compare the frame using the digital frame store, so you can mix between the current frame being worked on and the last frame shot. If it is OK on the video screen, we take a PAR frame and then play the sequence on the PAR in real time. If all that is OK, then we take the frame on film and do it all again and again and again 25 times per second of finished film. This mostly takes around 10 to 12 minutes per frame.

Q Will you stick with the Amiga in future?

A It is the animators first choice. Until very recently, when DPS brought out a new version the Perception Video Recorder that runs with Windows NT, it remains the essential tool for us. We will stay with the Amiga just as long as we can keep them going.

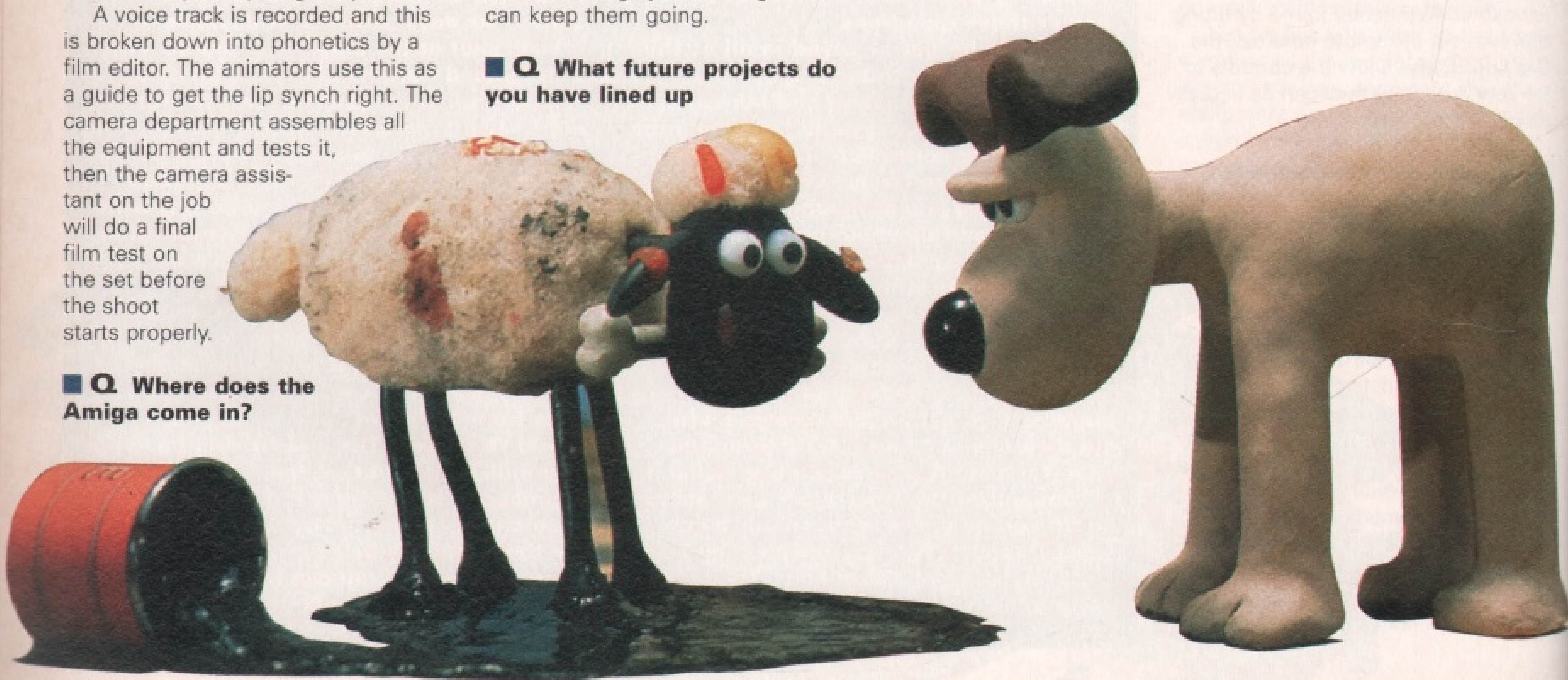
Q What future projects do you have lined up

A All sorts really. Nowadays there is too much work for one person, so the whole team work together. With many projects either shooting or in development at the same time , it is

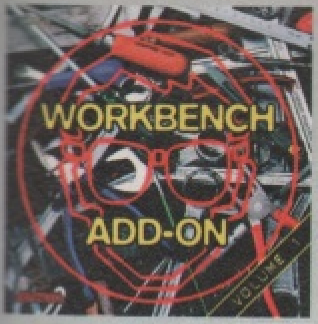
'After testing various systems, we found that the DPS Personal Animation Recorder on Amiga worked best for us.'

all a lot of work, and we have a great deal of fun putting it all together. We also get a lot of visitors, and we try to spend time with college students, and even on the phone to help budding animators where we can.

Lisa Collins

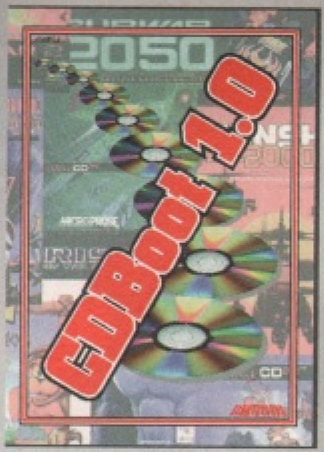


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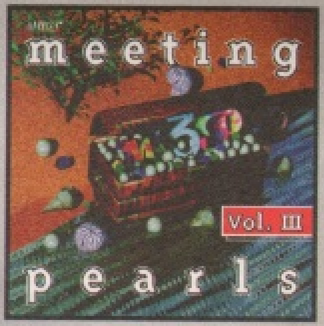
Workbench Add-On Volume 1

The Workbench Add-On CD-ROM is the ideal companion to your workbench. On this CD you will not only find the best programs, that are available for the Amiga, but you will also get them ready-to-run from the CD. In addition to this there is an installer script that installs the desired programs to your harddisk.
The CD covers all areas of interest, all, the programmer, the user, the creative and the gamer will find what they are looking for. On this CD-ROM there are many shareware programs, some of them at a special price, if you get registered. There is e.g. Shapeshifter for 40.- DM (instead of 50.- DM), in addition to this there is a 50 MB Mac partition, so that you can start playing around with Mac applications right away. Then there is PowerPlayer for 20.- DM (instead of 30.- DM), there are, of course, loads of modules with it, so that you can try it right away. AmiWin, the new X11-server for the Amiga is available for $40, instead of $50. You can sa ve more than 100.- DM with this CD. Therefore you only have to send in the appropriate page in the booklet to the author of the program. £24.95



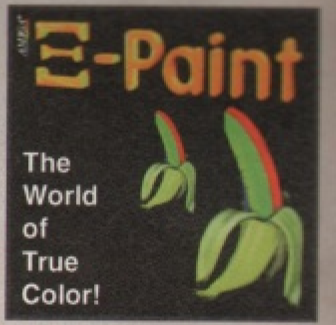
CDBoot 1.0

CDBoot is a fantastic new product that enables you to use almost any CD32 games on an A1200 or A4000 (with AT- or SCSI-CD-ROM drive and any filesystem). You can create a configuration file for each CD, containing information on the Joypad emulation. You can also save the highscore of each CD32 game. The usage and installation of CDBoot is very easy, also for beginners, due to the excellent English manual. Since the compatibility is very high, you can use 98% of CD32 games currently available. CDBoot is an excellent software solution for all Amiga-Freaks, who would like to enter the world of CD32 games! £34.95



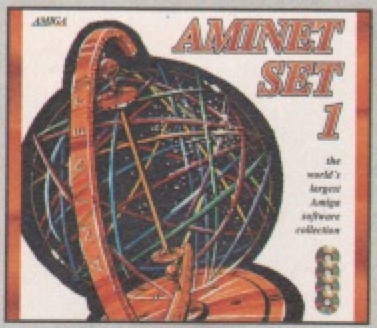
Meeting Pearls Vol. III

The Meeting Pearls Volume III contains 650 MB of the finest FD software via a special user interface, which has been created to allow you to find the program of your choice with ease. The contents: 10 MB Packer, Cruncher, Archive Programs · 3 MB CD-ROM Utilities · 21 MB Communication and Network Programs · 5 MB Debugging Tools · 29 MB Development Tools · 13 MB Floppy, Hard Disk ans SCSI Programs · 8 MB Educational Programs · 9 MB Games · 35 MB Graphics Programs · 39 MB Internet Movie Database, Updated Version · 7 MB Midi Tools and Programs · 27 MB Mods · 12 MB Music Programs · 21 MB Pictures · 13 MB AmiTCP and more for Networking · 60 MB Documentation, CD-ROM Databases, etc. - 96 MB PasTeX 1.4 - not previous available on any CD-ROM · 15 MB Utilities · 30 MB HTML-Pages - Collections of datatypes, benchmark programs, icons, programs for amateur radio and electrical/electronic engineering are also included. £9.95



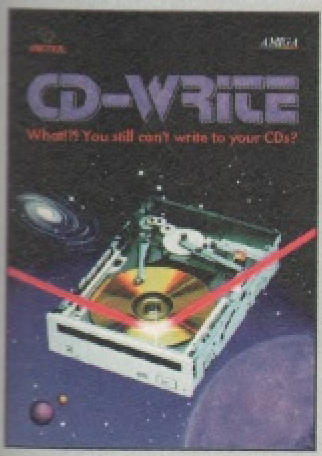
XiPaint V3.2

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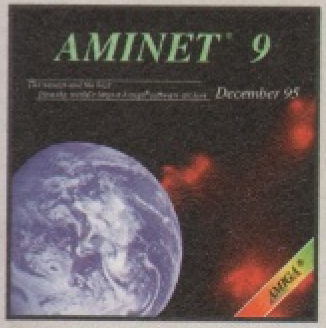
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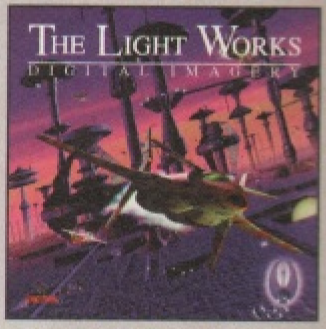
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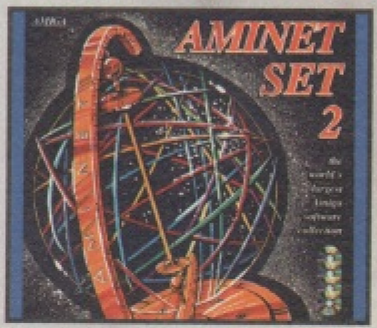
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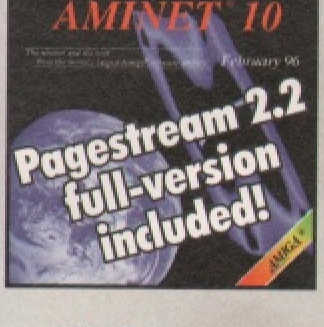
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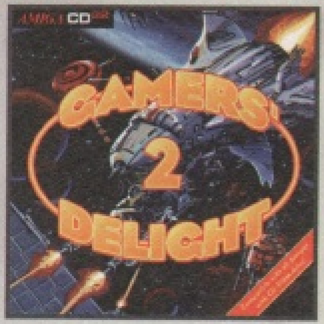
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Screen Scene



It's all gone a bit pear shaped at the moment as you will see from the vast, dark empty spaces opposite. We find ourselves sandwiched in between Christmas and Easter with this issue and thus our games pages may be described as at best sparse, at worst rather empty.

But we're not complaining. We did get an exclusive look at one of the hottest games of the year, now in the final throes of development: Chaos Engine 2, while Lisa travelled to the snowy south west for an exploratory visit to the bustling development basement of Intersect Developments. She came back goggle eyed. Find out why on page 42.

Watchtower is the lead review this month and by all accounts it's a decent shoot 'em up in the Commando mould, though its looks are definitely all Chaos Engine. World Golf is a miniature Sensible Golf, if such a thing were possible while Premier Manager 3 Deluxe updates an already good game. There's also all the usual tips and cheats in Vamp and Snip Tips with the added bonus of Zeewolf 2 help.

News just in from Time Warner Interactive should please SWOS fans: they are doing a special offer on the 95/96 edition of the game. Basically if you've bought the first version you can upgrade to the current season's one for £9.99, postage inclusive. All TWI asks you to do is provide proof of original purchase by sending them the bar code from the old Sensible World Of Soccer box along with a cheque or postal order for the above amount made out to Time Warner Interactive. Make sure to include your full name, address and postcode printed clearly, otherwise you'll never get your game! Send these to Time Warner Interactive, Customer Service SWOS Offer, 2 Carriage Row, 183 Eversholt Street, London NW1 1BU. Then enjoy your game.



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The Chaos Engine 2

■ Due: May ■ Developer: The Bitmap Brothers ■ Publisher: TWI © 0171 391 4300

Is your life too calm, too peaceful, too bloomin' boring, in fact. You need some excitement, what you want is a bit of chaos to shale things up. Well, you could get it sooner than you think...

Mr and Mrs Bitmap must have had very active bedtimes in the sixties and seventies. I counted at least 15 young men in their office, mostly around the same age. This puts most Catholic families to shame in my opinion. To name but a few, there was Simon Bitmap, Steve and his brother Steve Bitmap, Mark Bitmap, Richard Bitmap, even their sister Abi Bitmap. And these are just the brothers working on Chaos Engine 2. Sister Abi set up my interview.

But I jest. They are not in fact related at all. Despite my disappointment on this score I had a good chat with Chaos Engines' figurehead, the inimitable, and follicularly challenged, Simon Knight. Bitmap Brothers' Colonel Saunders without the beard. To my immense surprise, when I arrived in The Bitmap's Wapping office for my exclusive demo and interview, Simon was showing it to somebody else! Another magazine? Had I been cheated? No, some geezer had just walked in off the street and they thought he was Alan Dykes. Haven't they heard it's dangerous to talk to strangers these days (much less an Irishman)?

The Chaos Engine 2 was first revealed in Spring 1995. Before this there were only rumours that a new version was being done, but the first one was so successful, a follow up was inevitable. The plot of the game revolves around a chap called the Baron's quest for the Chaos Engine, the machine at the heart of the first game, which got blown up and spread to the four parts of time. Now the Baron wants it back in one piece and he has hired mercenaries to do the job for him.







In the first game two player mode was a cooperative affair, fighting side by side to defeat the enemy. Even in one player mode you had assistance from the computer who played the second character for you. In this game however the emphasis is on competition. The screen is horizontally split which means that each character can operate totally independently. The idea is to collect pieces of the Baron's puzzle, kill as many baddies as possible and make it to the end of the level first. The key to the change in emphasis is that you actively try to kill the other character and steal their keys etc, to defeat them. Each level has to have one winner.

This can be done in two player mode or as a single player. In the latter form you can retain the split screen, in which case you'll be able to see the other character's movements, or else return to the old style single screen. The computer characters have their own advanced intelligence and the Bitmaps claim that this will adapt to the experience and style of each individual human player.

The team working on Chaos 2 includes Simon himself who is the game designer, Steve Kelly who has done most of the in-game programming Mark Vick and Dave Trevelyan who have programmed the intelligence for the computer controlled characters, Steve Cargill who has been doing support and systems programming, Richard Joseph who



▲ Both screens operate independently, allowing one player to see what the other is up to.



▲ Not only does the other character have improved AI, the enemies do too.



▲ Above, on the Aztek level the Mercenary has just been downed and has lost all his belongings.



▲ Brigand beats Navvie in all out war shocker! In either one or two player mode the object is to beat your opponent to the exit.



was contracted from outside to do the music and SFX, Gary Carr who did the monster sprites artwork and Dan Malone who did the backgrounds and main characters. It's been in development for nearly two years now, so we asked Simon and Steve Kelly how they were getting along.

Alan: What is the object of the game?
SImon: 'The object of the game is to succeed to the detriment of the other player, in all aspects, in solving puzzles in winning the levels, in getting more experience.'

Alan: How complicated has the AI become?
Simon: 'The original system we devised works quite well, but the hardest thing is to create a consistent challenge. It's very easy to make him intelligent so that he can win every time, because he knows the level, the hardest thing is to make him play in a responsive way to make it fun even for players that aren't really good'

Alan: It looks similar to number one, what are the big differences?
Simon: The graphics are similar-ish, we've used the same viewpoint and it's based around the same characters, but there are now more animation frames for each character and the baddies have all been updated too. But the game has changed a lot. It's changed in pace, it's changed in objective, apart from the visuals there aren't many similarities at all.'

Alan: Are you still enjoying programming on the Amiga or are the Bitmaps deserting the Amiga like so many others?
Simon: 'This project is something new, something out of the ordinary and it is nice to do this on a machine you're familiar with. This allows you to experiment much more in terms of the game engine and intelligence. You're not spending your time learning how to control the equipment. you're actual spending your time developing the game, which is what we really wanted to do. Also, when we started it was at the point when there wasn't really a clear path, so we're happy finishing things off here, and we're certainly enjoying it. We have looked into doing Z on the Amiga [the Bitmap's current PC product], obviously it's



quite difficult because there's a lot going on in Z and it was designed as a PC game from the outset. Basically this really depends on the state of the market.

Alan: If you had to recommend a specification for the new Amiga, that would allow you to produce more games, what would it be?
Steve: More memory, decent sized internal hard disk and a faster processor. With something like Chaos engine 2, an accelerator doesn't help at all, but with a project like Z it would be necessary. We've been developing Chaos Engine 2 on the A1200, but there is an A500 version in development to, although this is lagging behind. It looks a bit different because of the graphics, but the gameplay and speed are very similar to the A1200 version.

Alan: What didn't you like about the scientist? Why have you cut the game down to four characters?
Simon: The decision was mostly made by Dan, based on the graphics, I mean the scientist/preacher was an obvious one to go because of the similarities. Basically though we needed the space because of all the extra animation frames, we needed all the memory available just to use four characters. Also, in terms of providing a real difference between them it's very difficult to get the intelligence right so that they all play differently. Doing four enabled us to give them very different playing styles.



Alan: What are you programming it in?
Steve: In a mixture of C and assembler. Rob Trevelyan who did the intelligence for Speedball 2 and for Chaos Engine on the SNES programmed it for us on this one, using C but creating a language of its own which the rest of us could then use and modify.

The version I saw was very near completion. We played through two of the four worlds, Aztek and Future world, and the graphics were great looking. The new sprite animations are pretty impressive too and the split screen system worked well. In total there will be five levels on each world and each has very specific features and enemies. I'm pretty excited about The Chaos Engine 2, so hopefully we'll have a review for you next month!■
Alan Dykes



▲ As you progress through Chaos 2, your character gains experience.



▲ Steve Bitmap, Steve Bitmap, Simon Bitmap and Nick Bitmap trying not to look like brothers.

Intersected Development

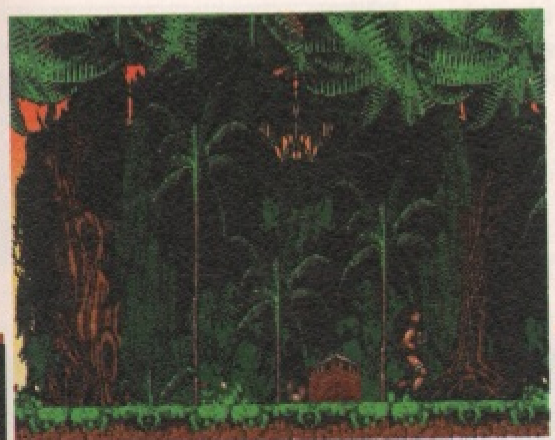
Problem: no good Amiga games around. Solution: make your own. That's what these guys did ...



▲ Here are some exclusive shots of the later levels of Atrophy. CU Amiga Magazine always gets there first.

"Wouldn't have one [a PC] in the house," laughed Intersect Development's Frank Tout at the suggestion that he might have used PCs at some point whilst working on their current store of Amiga games. Dedicated Amiga enthusiasts, this two-man team (the other half being Trevor Mensah) prides itself on only using Amigas for all its work. Intersect Development are an inspiration in these slightly murky times for the Amiga games market. First because they only use Amigas to produce quality games and second because their loyalty to the Amiga is self evident as they are determined not to let it die. So we were only too delighted, despite the bitter weather, to take our chances on British Rail and travel down to their Torquay office (ie, home) to see what they had lined up.

We're not talking multi-national software company set up with Intersect Development, but they still produce the goods anyway. The set up is simple. Frank works, on his A1200 from his flat in Torquay while Intersect's other half, Trevor, works on the code in Liverpool where he is currently studying computing. They exchange ideas and material via mail, which is how they met originally. Frank, who has been with Commodores since the C64 days, started corresponding with Trevor when he wrote to him to get the source code for a game that he'd written for AmigaNuts.





▲ Neyok's title screen was rendered in LightWave and the screenshot doesn't do it justice here. Sorry folks.

Games galore

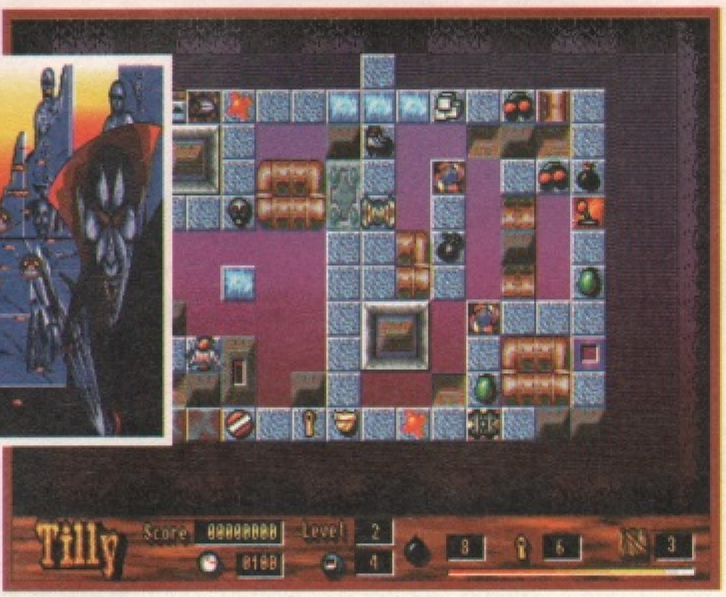
The first project we were shown was Atrophy. You may remember that we previewed this scrolling shoot 'em up in March and were impressed by what we saw. It was interesting, therefore to see how it had developed in the later stages. The scrolling shoot 'em up, which will have six levels when finished, is now nearing completion. All it's waiting on is a tidy up on the collision detection front. Obviously proud of the game, Franks states that: "What we like about it [Atrophy] is that it is so smooth, everything happens at 50 fifty frames a second compared to other games which, invariably happen at 25."

Next up, we were given a sneak preview of another game which is in the latter stages of development: Tilly. A puzzle game which will will comprise of a massive 100 levels and an editor so when you exhaust these you can start on your own. It looks fairly basic, a little spherical chappy races around a maze set up, teleporting here there and everywhere in a bid to collect as many pick-ups (the usual sort: treasure chest, pieces of fruit, cuddly toys, OK maybe not) as possible.

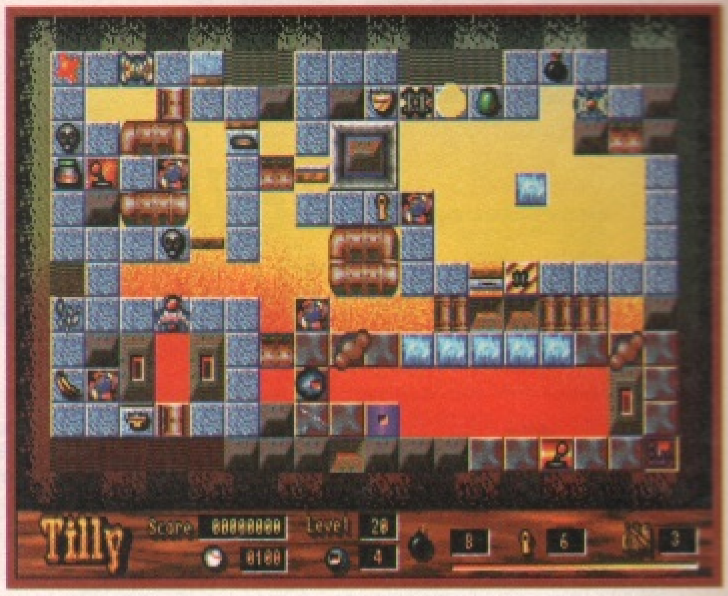
The four other games we talked about; Neyok, Phasic Distortion, Alternate Futures and Dominions are currently in the early stages of development. Neyok and Alternate Futures will both be sci-fi based platform games. Neyok, Frank says will be "somewhere along the lines of Shadow of the Beast". It is actually New York in a future world where the earth has been wiped after nuclear burn out and it's up to the hero to leap through three "huge" platforms to save the world. Alternate Futures continues along the same vein, only the story centres around a scientist getting lost







▲ Tilly is looking like it will be finished before Atrophy. However, there isn't a publisher for it yet.



▲ Tilly will have a 100 levels and just when you thought you'd finished there's an editor to make even more.

in his time machine and being transported back in time rather than forward. Phasic Distortion, a triple playfield, eight way scroller, is back to a maze/puzzle-type setup where you have to race around collecting prototypes. Finally, Dominions, with 256 hi-res graphics, is a move towards RPGs. It will be a series of three point and click games featuring a hero called Gary Somerton caught in a "no man's land".

All these games will be AGA only as Intersect feel that they couldn't' achieve the same quality on non AGA machines.

How do they do that?

How, you might ask do two men, one based in Liverpool, the other Torquay manage to keep ideas and productivity going? It's quite simple really, according to Frank: "It's all thanks to the unique game engine we have developed which makes it simple to get a game idea into action. The engine is central to everything we do, we write a game around it because it can do what we want without taking up too much time,".

So what other software do they use? LightWave, DPaint, and Personal Paint are used for the graphics and ProTracker for the sound. Tony Horgan paled at the suggestion that someone should use something other than OctaMED though. Frank replies that: "A guy called Lee Smith did all the music for Atrophy using ProTracker. OctaMED is too slow for playing back, we couldn't have put it in the game as it takes too much time and we'd end up having glitches and stuff like that."

We left Frank furiously working away on getting Atrophy and Tilly finished so we should a review copies very soon. At the time of going to press OTM hope to Atrophy on the shelf by April. ■

Lisa Collins

Slamtilt Pinball

■ Due: March ■ Publisher: 21st Century Entertainment © 01235 851852

Is there something about Scandinavia that encourages great pinball games on computer? Unless I'm greatly mistaken they are not very well known for their pub pinball tables. But, considering how cold it gets up there, and how expensive pub drinks are, it's perhaps not surprising they don't go out. What was surprising though was that 21st Century and Digital Illusions parted company after three very successful games. 21st then linked up with a company called Spidersoft to do Pinball Mania. This was bundled with the Magic pack but looked unfinished, unpolished and generally disappointing.

It was with much relief then that Helen from 21st popped



into the office a couple of weeks ago with Slamtilt. Four tables from Scandinavia yes, but not from Digital Illusions. The new programmers are Liquid Design and by the look of these tables, they've matched, if not surpassed Illusion's mastery.

The four tables are based around Demons, Space, Mean Machines and Pirates, and the sheer quality of the graphics matches Pinball Illusions.

This game is much deeper and faster than Pinball Mania was, but added to the table-top wizardry are some very comprehensive animations and rigorous





sub games. High scores and much of the gameplay revolves around reading this animation panel and using its features. This appears to go much further than any other pinball game I've seen before. But I haven't had an opportunity to test it for more than an hour, so I can't comment on the difficulty or effectiveness of this approach at the moment.

Of course it could be argued that there are enough Pinball games on Amiga already: surely there's only so many variations you can have on a theme? OK, so how many platform games have there been? Case rested.

I just hope that Slamtilt lives up to the promise it showed in this preview, if it does it should appeal not only to the hardened pinball player but to anyone interested in a good, new, playable arcade game. We'll find out next month. ■

AD

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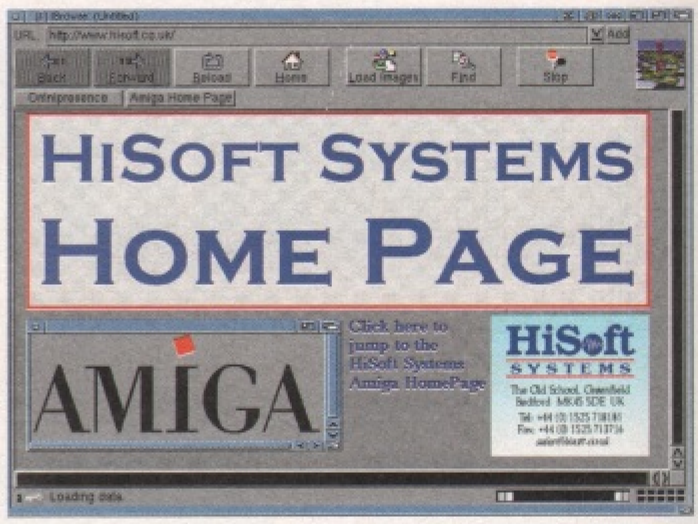
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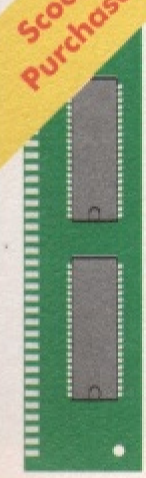
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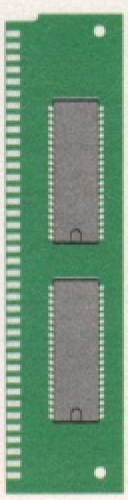


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Watchtower

■ **Price: £25.95** ■ **Publisher: OTM✆ 01827 312302**

If you wanted tips on the following game, just try the age-old advice "If it moves, shoot it". This would also be a good time to find a friend, 'cause you're gonna need as much help as you can get!



▲ I realise that most of our readers don't even talk to humans, but if you've got a mate, why not play the two-player game?





▲ Collect any uncovered coins for some extra points.

Upon loading Watchtower, the immediate thought that springs to mind is "Cwor, this don't 'arf look like Chaos Engine!" – and quite rightly so. The graphics certainly owe more than just a passing nod to the Renegade classic. However, after a few minutes playing you realise that Watchtower's contents is more akin to elderly titles such as Commando and Rambo, not to mention the Sensi Classic, Cannon Fodder.

The game's creators have mercifully spared us a twenty page plot, instead opting for the more easily digestible "You're one well-hard geeza up against the enemy army in its entirety" theme — and before you know it, you're off up the screen armed only with a pea-shooter and a handful of grenades.

The game itself is split into six missions, each with a different objective and a different setting (eg desert, enemy base, urban). The truth, however, is that the game play is pretty much unchanged throughout, with only graphical changes and the odd new enemy type making the different levels identifiable. Whether you're on level two or five, you can bet your granny's spare teeth that most of your time will be spent shooting hostile enemy soldiers and blowing up installations, tanks, aircraft, and... well, pretty much anything that'll react to a well placed grenade really. The aforementioned explosive apples come in limited supply, so crates and boxes mush be blown open along the way as you search for fresh supplies and point-rewarding items. The programmers have obviously spent time perfecting their explosion graphics – and very nice they are too – but this is more than just a special effect, as it can also be exploited by the player. How? Well let's just say that any enemy units near exploding items, er... 'fly away to meet their maker'. Hurrah!

Guns, guns, and more guns

As previously mentioned, the player starts off with a full compliment of grenades (the maximum allowed being nine) and the standard issue pistol, namely the Desert Eagle Magnum .44. Unfortunately, this has a fairly low damage rating, a pretty pathetic range, and a limited rate of fire, so you'll need to find some crates as soon as possible and blow them apart in the hope of finding a better weapon. There are a number of guns to be found, but due to weight, only one type of gun can be carried at any point. It is therefore down to the player to become familiar with each gun's attributes and on-screen appearance so that you don't accidentally swap, for instance, an M60 machine gun – with excellent range and rate of fire – for a rocket launcher that, while having the best range possible, can only fire one rocket at a time.

Other toys to play with include AK-47 Kalashnikov, Israeli UZI Sub-Machine gun, M16 Assault Rifle, Minigun, and a Flame Thrower with continuous flame and high damage – grrr! Of course, as well-armed as you are, you can expect to encounter enemy soldiers with the same level of weaponry as yourself, and what with you starting each new mission back with the pistol, well, let's just say that complacency isn't advisable.

As well as engaging enemy troops, you can also expect to come up against some fairly serious military hardware in the form of tanks, supply trucks, and even bombers that fly across









▲ Before each mission you're shown your position on the overall campaign world map, along with a truncated brief (ie kill everything).



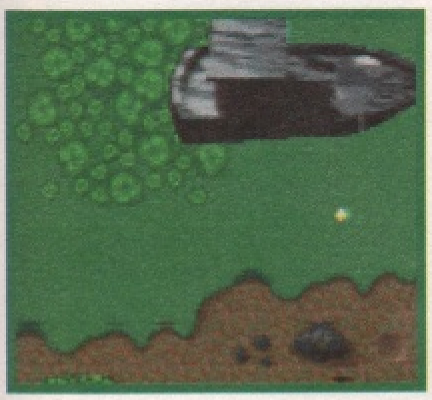




▲ Blowing these crates has revealed exactly what the doctor ordered — more grenades!

the screen dropping their deadly payload right on the old noddle. Fortunately, careful rationing of the ever-popular grenades will ensure that you're always in a position to reply to such challenges in kind.

The level designs are well thought out, so ambushes are frequent enough to keep the player on his toes, while narrow (not to mention well protected) bridges call for some sharp shooting skills. As well as a large number of obstacles that can be blown to clear a path, there are also buildings and installations that must be worked around as the screen scrolls slowly to reveal new areas on the map. As if that wasn't enough, later levels are covered in land mines, but thanks to the fact that many of the enemy soldiers are not only single-minded but pretty damn thick, they can be tricked into clearing routes through such deadly grounds (and a very good impression of chopped tomatoes they do too!).



Reap the many rewards

As you progress through the missions your performance is evaluated, and if you've been a good boy, you could even find yourself being awarded with a nice badge or even a shiny medal. How does a Legion of Merit grab you? Or perhaps a Medal of Honour, a Silver Star, a Bronze Star, a Distinguished Service Cross, or a United Nations Medal. One to avoid, however, is the Purple Heart as this is generally only awarded to those who have died as a result of standing in front of enemy snipers shouting "come and get it big boy". You can also impress your friends and family with promotions throughout the campaign – right through from Private to Brigadier General.





▲ Hurrah! I'm great I am.

And the final verdict is...?

To be honest, as simplistic as Watchtower is, it's actually pretty good fun. It's certainly of the 'old school' as far as game play goes – but as long as it's still fun, who cares? The comparisons to Chaos Engine only really go as far as the presentation, the fact that you can have two players trundling around at the same time, and the graphical representation of the extremely questionable coins that appear throughout the game as point bonuses. Other than that, it's all very basic in as much as you just wade through the levels killing everything that crosses your path.

At times the screen can get a tad crowded, as large numbers of soldiers all appear at once, adding to the on-screen confusion with bullets spraying in all directions (though I'm sure you'll be glad to know that only once in my entire testing sessions did I encounter any slowdown). The only other comment worth noting with the screen is that you have to sometimes wait for the scrolling to catch up with your position, otherwise you'll be standing on the edge of the screen just as a new soldier appears, which is – needless to say – a bit of a git.

The choice of weapons is impressive, although once you get yourself a decent weapon with a good range and fair damage, there's no real need to swap around. As for the grenades, well... they're great! I would say, though, that due to the game's general difficulty (ie bloody hard for the most part!) a few more grenades wouldn't have gone amiss.

And that's about it really. The three difficulty levels don't appear to do much more than make the soldiers tougher (not in intelligence, but where one bullet would suffice on the easy level, you'll need two for the medium level) while the six levels are progressively more busy and generally nasty. As for whether you're getting twenty six quid's worth of value, well... that's really down to how much you personally go for 'bread and butter' arcade games. My personal advice would be to give Watchtower a go, because while it ain't Earth-shattering, it's not at all bad. ■

Matt Broughton

WATCHTOWER

workbench version	3.0
number of disks	3
RAM	2MB
hard disk installable	yes

A1200

graphics	70%
sound	68%
lastability	73%
playability	75%

OVERALL
A tad basic, but pretty entertaining. **78%**


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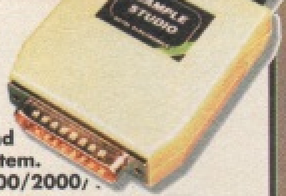
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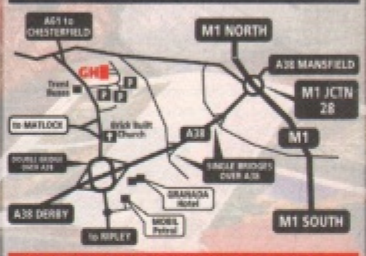
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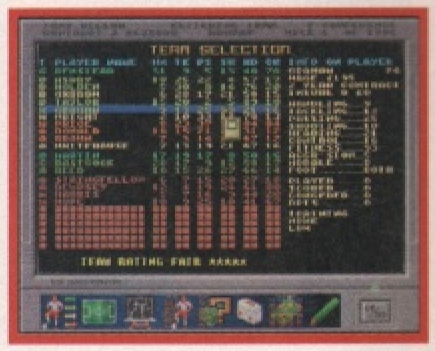
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Premier Manager 3 Deluxe

■ **Price: £TBA ■ Publisher: Gremlin ✆ 081 988 8888**

Gremlin's Premier Manager series has been on the go for donkeys years and is one of the most popular footy games ever. We haven't seen anything from this Sheffield based software house for nearly a year now so a parcel thus post marked and obviously filled with a box created a bit of a stir. The last item they sent us was Premier Manager 3 Multi Edit, a support program for the PM3 series. Just what could this be?

Not to be outdone by SWOS, Player Manager and Ultimate Soccer Manager Premier Manager 3 has had the latest teams and league structures bolted on to bring it bang up to date with the 1995/1996 season. The basic game remains the same though and they've been good enough to supply the original manual. In fact the packaging is pretty comprehensive: it's nice to see that Gremlin aren't trying to do what is definitely, possibly, maybe, their last Amiga game on the cheap ... though the fact that they claim to have sold over half a million of the various versions of this one program so far may have something to do with this too.





The Multi Edit software released last year is included in this version too. This means you're getting two programs. The Multi Edit is not a data or update disk, it is designed to operate separately, creating save games for the full program. This it does well, allowing you to create your own scenarios and even edit the on-screen text and messages.

Premier Manager 3 stands the test of time. As a comprehensive football management sim it is still one of our office favourites, alongside On The Ball and Ultimate. When originally launched we felt that it was a little too like PM2 for comfort, and if anyone took our advice at that stage then now might be the time to upgrade as the Multi Editor does make this package more interesting. The only problem marking this game is the fact that Gremlin have supplied it to us with no fixed price. If someone sells it for under £20 and you're in the mood for an upgrade it's good value. At £25 or more you might do well to wait and see if Domark's Championship Manager 2, the only genuinely new sim on the way, has the necessary ooomph to tackle you by the short and curlies.■

AD

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A500+
A600
A1200
A1500
A2000
A3000
A4000

83%

World Golf

■ **Price: £14.99 ■ Publisher: Apex Systems ✆ see text**



Quote of the month: "I played the cover disk demos of Sensible Golf, and frankly, I wasn't impressed." So writes Mr David Kirk of Apex Systems. Of course, the difference between Mr Kirk and most unimpressed readers, is that he actually did something about it – he went and wrote his own version. Oh yes ...

It is indeed true, for here before us we find World Cup, an interesting little offering that comes courtesy of mail order only for the bargain price of £15. There are five famous courses to choose from (Castle Pines, Gleneagles, Little Aston, Muirfield Village, and Wentworth), 63 individually skilled computer opponents to challenge, and the option of up to four human players. There's also an auto-caddie option, where the computer points you in the right direction and selects the correct club for you.



The game format is nothing particularly new, with the good old power-bar making an appearance and, on the whole, it all holds together well. The presentation is nice and clear, the sound effects are as effective as I guess it's possible to be with a big empty field, and everything works as well as you'd expect. It's just that it's a bit unremarkable.

The graphics are simple, but don't really offer the player much in the way of reward, while the gameplay is a bit too basic to warrant any striking comment. It really is just a straight forward cross between Sensi Golf and the millions of other golf games we've seen over the past few years.

Because it's so plain, there's nothing to rave over and, similarly, nothing to really moan about. The only possible complaint (and where perhaps Mr Kirk should have a look at Sensi) is that the scale doesn't change when you get onto the green, making accurate targeting and power selection a lot less controllable. There's also a problem when, if you are right by the hole but technically off the green, it defaults to irons, leaving you to misjudge and tonk the ball over the other side again (and I don't remember golf balls bouncing like ping pong balls either!)

As for Mr Kirk saying that he made this game because he was disappointed with Sensi, well, I think it's a 'people in glass houses' situation. Should you fancy a copy of World Golf, you'll want to send £14.99 to Apex System, 8 Gosling Gate Road, Goldthrope, Rotherham, South Yorkshire S63 9LU.■

MB

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A3000
A4000

62%

Adventure Helpline



She's mean, moody and magnificent and knows more about things that go 'bump' in the night than she should. If you are at your wits end with an adventure problem turn to Vampyra for help.

Dungeon Master II

I am having trouble getting the last Clan piece from the revolving table in the castle between the spooky trees. Each time I go near the table it revolves and moves the piece to the opposite side of the table. How can I get to it?

Jim Laver, Hatfield.

Would it help if I pointed out that this table is like all the tables which you found in the shops? Think back to how you got the table in the shop to revolve and give you what the shopkeeper had placed at his side? Stupid boy!

Maniac Mansion

I have a walk-through guide for Maniac Mansion and all was going well until it said 'walk to the hatch in the man-eating plant room and use the plant to climb into the room above'. After this I was to use the telescope in the room above but I can't get through the hatch as the plant stops me. Could you put me out of my misery?

Craig Ashton, Leicester.

Your walk-through was probably written by the same person who wrote the recipe for Dragon Stew. It says, 'first catch and kill a dragon'. The trick is to first make the plant grow by using a jar of pool water on it. Next use a can of Pepsi on it to kill it stone dead.

Police Quest II

I'm stuck in Cotton Cove with my partner Keith and Officer Gelespi. There is also a girl present and I've talked to her about the blood. I would like to know how to get past Bains who appears from nowhere when I go up river. When I get killed I get the message: 'make sure sights are set properly and aim gun at the target.' What does this mean?

K. Dodd, Park Village.

Well you are suffering from one of two options. Either you couldn't hit a cow's bum with a banjo while holding its tail or the sights on your gun need adjusting. Let's be charitable and guess that you haven't been to the shooting range today and adjusted your sights. In fact I'll bet a sloppy kiss to a pint of your blood that that's the answer to your problem. In this game you must go to the shooting range every day and successfully reset your sights or you will die later on.

Operation Stealth

I bought Operation Stealth two months ago and I'm finding it extremely difficult. I have passed through the four labyrinths and have ended up stuck in an office. I have no clue what I'm going to do next. I have a little box, a watch, an electric razor, an electric cable and a pen. Can you help me?

Alexandre Valerio, Portugal.

I'll assume that you are in the Palace. If this is true and you are in the office with the statue, then your next move is to 'operate' the arm of the statue to reveal a safe. You can now use the little box on the safe, and operate the on/off button to switch it on. Operate the up and down arrows until the first light on the box illuminates. Operate the validation button on the safe. Operate the up and down buttons until the second light on the box lights up. (Do this again for the third and fourth numbers). Operate the on/off switch on the box to switch off and take it. Operate the validation button on the safe again and it will open.

Drakkhen

I have the eight tears from the Drakkhen Princes and Princesses but there is mention of a ninth hidden tear. Where is it?

Alan Goodridge, Barnsley.

I cannot tell I lie, I don't know. Maybe a reader could help if they knew. However, I do know quite a few clever tricks for this game, so I thought at least I would help you as much as I could. When you create a character and it asks for a name use 31415927<Return>. Now type SUPERVISOR<Return>. Continue as normal and you will get a very powerful character. Once you have done this you can press F10 during the game and your Magic and Hit Points will go to maximum. Even better, press and hold F9 while you right-click at the bottom of the dialogue window. This calls up Supervisor mode. You could now summon any monster by 'clicking' on their names but I wouldn't recommend that! Release F9, press and hold F8 while you again click in the same place and your character will be miraculously changed into a super-hero. A bit like me really.

Monkey Island II

I need help to get a map piece which I believe is under the cottage on the small island off Phatt Island, but the bloke upstairs is giving me grog that makes me incapacitated. I have tried emptying my mug on the tree but the guy keeps refilling it with his own. I can't think how to win this so-called competition. Please help?

C. Dutton, Clwyd.

If I had a penny for each time someone tried to get me 'incapacitated' by forcing me to drink too much I would be a rich girl. Happily it's me who usually ends up drinking from the 'mugs' who try. The trick is not to let the guys realise that you have an empty glass, because they just fill it up again. What you must do is empty your mug on the tree, then quickly fill it up with near-grog which isn't alcoholic.

Simon The Sorcerer

Can you tell me how to pick up the woodworms so I can get the staff?

Lauren Eames, Gillingham.

You don't pick up the woodworms you foolish child, you talk to them and they tell you things. Which reminds me, do you know why girls are called birds? Because they pick up worms. ■

If you've got a little problem with your favourite Role Playing Game and would like Vamp to help you out, drop her a line at CU Amiga Magazine, Priory Court 30-32 Farringdon Lane, London EC1R 3AU.



A TRIED AND TESTED CURE FOR INSOMNIA, IS TO GET PLENTY OF SLEEP.

Snip tips

Don't forget, every printed hint gets a free game from the Hit Squad label. Aren't they super?



Poor Matt hasn't been very well this month, but he's dragged his limp and lifeless body into the office (where he fits in nicely in that condition) just for all you needy readers

RoadKill A1200
Guildhall Leisure

Richard Donnellan from Oldham has found a way to make an easy billion or so in this top racing game. Get a password code such as **LQPONTULRI** (this will get you into the second scenario) and switch the sixth and seventh letters. For example, **LQPONTULRI** will now become **LQPOUNTLRI**. Enter the new password and you should complete level 2-1 with around $4,000,000,000. You can also try this out with the other password codes – although it works with some and not others.

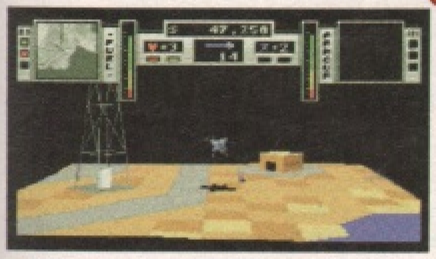
Zeewolf 2
Binary Asylum

The up to date stuff is now flooding in thick and fast and J Mc Mahon from Lanarkshire starts us off with level codes for this top flight sim:

Mission	Code
2	Requin
3	Wolfram
4	Fullmoon
6	Ouragan
9	Stag
11	Kraken
14	station
16	GBULL
18	STATIPAUSE
20	DO IT NOW

... And Chris Hands, Shropshire also helps out with even more level codes for Zeewolf 2.

23	SHIPDECK
24	GLOBOFF
26	BEHAVE
28	SHADOW
29	MAX FUEL
30	PELPAY
31	DOMINO
32	STEERDART



▲ Up-to-the-minute cheats for an up-to-the-minute game Zeewolf 2, yee haa! My prayers are answered

Alien Breed 3D
Team 17

"Not enough of the recent stuff eh", writes Mick Slingsby of Leicester as he defiantly sends us in his level codes for Alien Breed 3D. Thank you Mick and thanks also to Darren White for his help. Anyway here they are:

Level 2	CMOFFJENPPHHFFFF
Level 3	MIOOEDEOPPFFFFFF
Level 4	KPKOFOPOHOEHFFFF
Level 5	NLIAMBOOPHHFHFFN
Level 6	FOIINMPOCNFFFFFF
Level 7	CCCGIDOPPFEEFFFF
Level 8	PPKKIKKPNAANEOMD
Level 9	LLKOHBLPNAANEOMD
Level 10	BMAGHMLPNAANEOMD
Level 11	HCIGGHLPNAANEOMD
Level 12	LNIECOLPNAANEOMD
Level 13	OLKOPFKPNAANEOMD
Level 14	EOIGLMKPNAANEOMD
Level 15	LKKOPPKPNAANEOMD
Level 16	GNAEPPKPNAANEOMD

Streetfighter II
US Gold

Select a one-player game and position the selection box over Blanka but DO NOT press fire. Instead slowly type the word **PATIENCE** and you should hear a digitised voice say 'Cheat'. Now select your character and start the game. Note that you do not have to choose Blanka as your fighter.



When fighting press F10 at any point during the game to replenish all your energy. Also pause the game and type 7KIDS to be able to play a two-player game against a friend as the same character. Well done Mr Mark Wadham from Cornwall. Incidentally, does anyone remember the old game that used the cheat 7KIDS? Hmm.

Lotus Esprit Turbo Challenge
Gremlin

Mr Wadham once again provides the bread ... Enter the following names in a two-player race for automatic qualifying:

1) **FIELDS OF FIRE**
2) **IN A BIG COUNTRY**

Also, for a hidden sub-game enter these two names:

1) **MONSTER**
2) **SEVENTEEN**

k240
Gremlin

On the main asteroid screen press the return key and type in '**Loadsadosh**' pressing the return key after it for a small sum of money. This can be used as many times as you like to amount to a large sum of money. Cheers to Mark Draper, Stockport for that.

Road Rash
Electronic Arts

Mark Wadham, strikes gain. Just type in the following code to receive $7,815,000:

00001 04310 MSOPC 17PFM

Worms
Team 17

Here are few tips from David Minnis, Humberside for that all format favourite game involving hermaphrodites with weapons.

Sheep mode:
Type '**TOTAL WORMAGE**' (two words) on the main screen and you get a banana bomb, three sheep and a minigun to start with.

Secret move:
Stand next to a worm (not your own) and then press away, away, towards, towards then do a prod and you get a secret move.

Two versus two mode:
Select your four players, then select two of them again (they get circles instead of stars) you are now ready to play team worms.

Changing friction and gravity on custom screen mode:
The standard file name for a custom map is '**name.wxyz.wrm**' where w=gravity (1-5), x=friction (1-5), and y and z are sea and colours, respectively.



▲ Meet the talking prince in level two, three and four in this adventure from Vulcan.



▲ This game needs no introduction .... and we've got a chockload of cheats for it.

Valhalla: Before The War
Vulcan Software

Here's a few level codes from Linda Soul, Cricklewood, to keep you going...

2) **PUMEL** 3) **BOMAL** 4) **SAMOL**

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Megatronix Software, 21 Tiled House Lane, Brierley Hill, West Midlands, DY5 4LG

Zeewolf 2 tips

Some people have been having trouble with this great helicopter sim from Binary Asylum. Here's a guide to the first really difficult level.



LEVEL 10

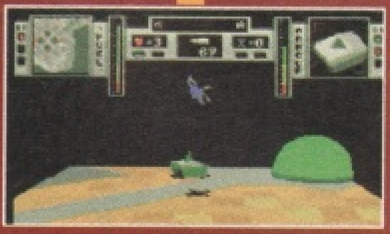
Like Cannon Fodder, Zeewolf 2 is not all about flying through each mission blazing away like a madman (or woman). Your Zeewolf becomes increasingly vulnerable on later levels as enemy weapons systems get more sophisticated and ammo levels are low to start with. Level 10 is a case in point. Zeewolf 2 has a staggered difficulty level which leads you into the game with a false sense of security. When you hit level 10 it seems like a dead end for a while; until you get the hang of how to do things in the right order. Although you start off with what seems like nowhere near enough ammo to finish the mission, if you use enemy fire the right way you will find plenty of surprises under the domes.



10-1 Ready for lift off. Go left to the small island and collect the shells and missiles from the Camel there. This should get you worried; there's only 17 shells and one missile! Now fly right to the main island and, whatever you do, do not waste shells on anything. If you are attacked, lose them. You cannot afford to spend any ammo at this point.



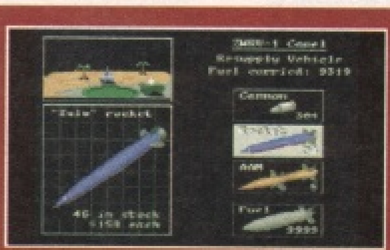
10-2 Although the mission involves picking up troops from damaged buildings there are rather a lot of them so you'll want to use the Pelican, not your Zeewolf. The surroundings are too dangerous at first so you've got to take out the base's defenses, especially the three AA emplacements on the edge of the island. First though scavenge for more ammo.



10-3 The only way to stock up on ammo is to blow up the green domes on the four corners beside the the high rise buildings, but you don't have enough firepower to destroy even one. The trick is to use the enemy. The Camel under the top right dome, contains 600 shells. Go and buzz the Bear guarding it and get him to shoot at you.



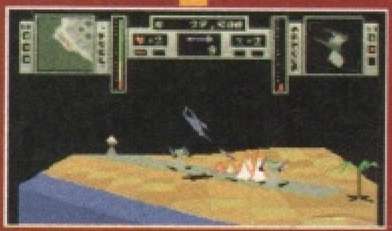
10-4 Now land on the other side of the Dome, just about in his sights. He will continue to attempt to shoot you but the Dome is in the way, so he'll blow it up first. It only takes 20 or so shells to destroy a Bear so as soon as the Dome blows up take off, destroy him and then land and pick up 400 or so shells from the Camel.



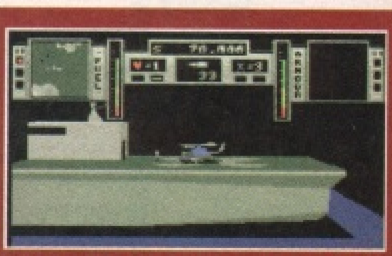
10-5 It's a good idea to leave some ammo behind: if you get shot down you will still be able to go back and get more. Otherwise you're back to 50 shells and you haven't a hope in hell of finishing the level. Now destroy the domes in the bottom left and bottom right hand corners of the base. These will reveal more ammunition.



10-6 The dome in the top left corner is also partially protected by the four missile emplacements so, although the method is the same, you have to be careful of fire from both sides. Also this Bear seems reluctant to destroy the dome, but persevere and don't use too much ammo. The helicopter base you've got to destroy to complete the mission will need loads.



10-7 Now take out the three missile emplacements at low level with several salvoes of missiles and guns blazing. YOU DO NOT want to get caught in any crossfire from these, they will take either chopper down in three seconds. If you're feeling lucky you could get these emplacements to knock out a few floors of the nearest skyscraper for you.



10-8 Shoot up some of the floors with your Zeewolf, but use the Pelican to shoot out the doors of each building, releasing the soldiers. Then load 'em up and airlift 'em to the carrier. If you have ammo left in the Pelican fly northwards from the carrier and cause as much damage to the air base as possible. Zeewolf should then still be well armed and ready to kill.

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PROGRAMMING + TEK

NORTHC V1.3 (AB)
update on the public domain "C" environment for Amiga that I am aware of.

DICE C COMPILER (AB)
Matthew Dillons full featured, powerful C compiler environment system.

PASCAL
everything needed to program in Pascal. A68k 68000 assembler. Blink, Linking software. PCQ, a modest Pascal sub set compiler.a

DIGITAL BREAD BOARD
GUI digital logic circuit simulator. Digital currently supports 2 and 3 input etc

DEVELOPER
the official Commodore developers kits for the Installer and Commodore Install utilities.

CIRCUIT BOARD DESIGN
Specific routines for the electronic enthusiast. PCBtool, a circuit board design tool.

GNU C++ COMPILER (3) [HD]
disks consists of the latest version of the GCC compiler. Thus the compiler, driver, assembler, linker, files inline code generation of library calls.

PROGRAM LANGUAGES
ACE is a PD Amiga BASIC compiler which, in conjunction with A68K & Blink produces stand alone programs; no run time shared libraries are required.

GAD TOOLS V2.3C
Shared Amiga shared runtime library which makes it easier / easier to build standard requesters into programs. Designed with CBM's guidelines in mind.

HOW TO CODE IN C (AB)
Programming, Intuition and Graphic, Kodbibliotek, Tricks, Amiga AsmFrameC, Dos Intuition, WB Libraries, GadToolsBox and Power Source.

N.D.U.K V37 (ABCD)
of the Commodore Native Developer Update Kit licensed for distribution. Includes the fd files, autodocs, C include files, and tools

MATHS FORMULA EDIT V2.1
is a formula editor, which is used to integrate mathematical formulas into word processors or DTP programs. It has an extensive amount of mathematical and symbols and many control codes for creating indices, exponents.

REQCHANGE V3.6
Patches Intuition, ASL, ARP & REQ to use the Req requesters instead. It also adds a couple of extra features, like an Assign Wedge, the possibility to send commands when a patched requester appears, & the option to configure how the patches behave.

MOTOROLA CROSS ASSEMBLER'S
A50,1,4,5,9,11

UTILS & POPULAR

CHECKERS TOOLBOX
An Amiga diagnosis program. Runs self test on all the ports and even the disk drive! All your results are tested and displayed in graphical information. Every Amiga owner should have a copy! Find out what is wrong with your Amiga before going to the shop to get it fixed. It may save you a bob or two!

VIRTUAL UTILITIES
7 utils containing everything needed for any user to make virtual memory from their harddrive. Amiga is fooled into thinking it has massive amounts of RAM when really it only has a small amount mapped to a file on the harddrive.

^ + V1719 TELETEXT V2.3
View Teletext (also know as Teletekst, Videotext, Ceefax, Skytext, Supertext etc.) on your Amiga. It is suitable for any PAL Amiga (read #[ ] System requirements link systems req) for more info, because it uses the parallel port to interface with the hardware. An electronic switch is provided to easily switch between the TeleText decoder and a printer.

^ ^ V1335 LIBRARIES & DATATYPES
This is a disk packed full of Amiga Workbench 3.0 Libraries and Datatypes. There's 47 Libraries from A to Z all libraries covered are right up to date and waiting to be installed. The disk also have installation notes to aid the beginners. also files in the L and Devs/DosDrivers drawers that can be copied or assigned.

^ + V1641 SUPER KILLERS V10.0
The latest collection of virus killers like AntiCicloVir v2.2a, Virus Checker v6.43, VirusZ II v1.07, and VT v2.67. Req the use of LHA which is in the c directory.

^ * V1017 POST V1.86ENH (ABC)
PostScript interpreter which implements the full Adobe language. Supports Adobe type 1 and type 3 fonts, screen output, file output, and printer output.

^ + V1593 EPU DISK STAKKER V1.7
Double your hard drive capacity by installing EPU. After installing EPU to any Device (HardDisk, Floppy, Rad etc) every file which will be written to the device will be compressed & when any compressed file is read by any application it will be decompressed.

^ * V1039 HD INSTALLER (AB)
Bought an A1200 machine and are having trouble with your hard drive why not install it correctly.

^ * V1136 DISKSALVE 2
Repair your hard drive with this. recommended.

^ + V1326 C: COMMANDS & LIBS
The C: and LIBS disk contains over 100 commands lie within the C directory. Over 20 LIBRARY's are within the LIBS directory. Use them for your disks. They can be used to spice the disk up in appearance and in usage.

^ + V0490 MESSY SID II
once loaded will read MS Dos disks, Convert any text (asc) files on to an Amiga dos disk so that they can be loaded into any standard Word processor. The program will also convert the text back to your IBM disks.

^ + V1611 SNOOPDOS V3.0
Log's all the dos/library calls and more when you run a program. This is handy for both the programmer and the beginner. Have you ever installed a program to your harddrive and then discovered that it will not run without a certain library but you don't know which?

^ + V1928 VIRUS WORKSHOP V4.8
This is the one and only Virus Workshop by Markus Schmall. Now in the Version 4.8 . Test it!

^ + V0424 ANTIFLICKER
A program to stop the Flickering when you use the Amiga in Hi res move.

^ + V1669 TUDE V1.0
is a very extensive and easy way of degrading your machine for all sorts of purposes. It is useful for playing old game on A1200s for example which need kickstart 1.3. There is a GUI version included as well as a CLI version so most people will have no trouble using it. A highly useful tool for all Amiga owners. Good.

^ + V1523 RELOKICK V1.41
ANOTHER(!) version of ReloKick. Galahad of Dual Crew did ReloKick 1.4, so I decided to improve on that!

^ + V1356 NOERRORS V1.3
Its main function is to hide physical disk errors from floppy disks and hard disks, so these disks can then be used without DOS showing read/write errors.

^ + V0662 DCOPY V3.1
Best PD copier on the Amiga. No new Features over 2 but has been updated with new code information.

^ ^ V1164 (AGA) ASA FIX DISK
An entire disk full of utilities for those A1200 and A4000 owners out there who can not for the life of them get some of there favourite games or demos to work.

^ * V1360 WB2.0 TUTORIAL
There is a lot more options open to you than just playing games. In the chapters Files Explained & Menus, attempt to explain the workings of WB2.as the manuals supplied with your Amiga.

^ * V1242 RE ORG V3.11
is a fast disk optimizer that can be used for floppy disks and hard disks. Supports new Kickstart 2.04 features including hard and soft links and High Density drives.

^ + V0685 APRO ASTROLOGY V3.5
Astro_22 as released is a starter program which accurately calculates the position of the planets, cusps and zodiac positions to within 30 seconds of arc. I intend to increase the usefulness of the program to eventually cover all aspects of the subject which will appeal to professional as well as novice astrologers not wishing to pay 200+ for a decent package. Updated version

^ + V0489 AMIBASE PRO II
This is the latest database program which is an update

^ + V0827 REPAIR IT V2.01
An essential set of tools for recovery. Disk speed reports the speed of a selected drive. DiskSalv will try to recover as much data as possible from a corrupt disk. HDTool will install the OS3 disk caching and FFS to the hard drive of a lesser operating system.

^ ^ V1661 NATIONAL LOTTERY
This is a national lottery prediction program called Lottery Winner. It consists of a database system which can record the National Lottery results from week to week until it has sufficient data to make certain types of predictions or just a random guess. Good.

^ + V1679 COP THE LOT
Lottery prediction/database which can store the previous lottery results and also select random numbers etc.

^ + V1771 COURSE FORM
Like to put a bit of money on the horses? This utility allows you to enter the figures for the horses in a particular race, plus the course details, and then it will try to predict the winner of the race. Good.

^ + V1778 LOTTERY CHECKER
is a great tool for checking lottery numbers. Good for office syndicates. Find 'A' Date is a database which stores and matches people up for blind dates. Sneaker is used to view and change binary files, technical users are always finding these programs useful.

^ * V1836 MRBACKUP V2.1.4
is a hard disk backup program for the Commodore Amiga family of computers. It provides a wide range of services to support Amiga file management and backup/restore of files to/from hard disk.

^ + V1837 DISK DOUBLING V1.9B
This package allows you to create virtual partitions on your HD. Files stored in such partitions get automatically compressed and decompressed whenever you access them, in a transparent way.

^ * V1838 VMM V3.0
A virtual memory manager for Amigas with a 68040,68030 or 68020+68851 processor.

^ + V1932 X-FILES GUIDE
The X-Files Guide disk is full of very usefull information if you are interested in the x-files. It contains over 674k worth of text, ranging from episodes 1 and 2 to the x-files transcript. It also has a survey you can fill in and send off to the author of the disk.

^ + V1949 MORE HD INSTALLERS
This disk contains the latest installers for the following games: ABASE, Arnie 2, ATR, Bump 'n' Burn, Naughty-ones, Rise of the Robots, Sensible World of Soccer, Shadow Fighters, Lion King, MKII_PAFIX, Parasol Stars, Rock'n'Roll, Skimarks 2, Skeleton Krew, Super Stardust, SoftB3, Trolls and Uridium 2.

^ + V1963 VIRUS WORKSHOP V5.1
This version of Virus Workshop is as good as any of the others or even better. You can check every single file on there own or all together. If it finds a virus it will tell you what it is and exactly what to do to get rid of it. This is probably the best version of Virus Workshop so far and well worth buying.

^ + V1965 BALLS
Balls is yet another lottery predictor program. It is actually quite good apart from the £5 fee if you want to get the registered version. It can predict random numbers or numbers from pre-entered numbers of upto 72 weeks earlier. A well presented lottery predictor, if your into all the lottery hype get this.

^ * V1969 AQUARIUM SIMULATOR
3d Aquarium Simulator (uses MUI2.0), check it out.

^ + V1982 SCOUT V2.1
Scout is a tool that allows you to monitor your computer system. It displays many different things like tasks, ports, assigns, expansion boards, resident commands, interrupts, etc.

^ + V1983 DOPUS UTILS 2
This is the second selection of utilities for use with the most popular Amiga Disk utility Directory Opus.

^ + V1997 LOTTERY PREDICTOR
Another lottery prediction system. This latest addition has a few added advantages over the other available. For a start this one uses intuition fully so it multitasks and it uses only a small window on your workbench. Also it looks very nice! The added touch of the lottery symbol makes all the difference. The best lottery predictor yet.

^ + V1998 AMIGADOS GUIDE V1.5
A very handy program for those who want to learn more about Amiga DOS or those who simply want an easy reference for commands etc.. The program consists of an easy to use point and click system with a index.

^ + V1999 COP THE LOT PRO
Yet another lottery program. This one will only generate random numbers, there is no option to actually make any sort of calculated prediction. There is also a Numbers drawn database and a My guesses database to help you keep a record of the numbers you have been choosing.

^ + V2000 BACK DOOR V6.0
This is the latest version of this now quite well known game cheat database. There are cheats and tips for hundreds of different games including a lot of recent titles. There are even long entries for games such as Dune II, which is a tactical game, detailing good methods of play

^ + V2001 NATIONAL LOTTERY
This program is more than just a random number generator. It uses uses a special History formula with Chaos Theory to produce a more accurate prediction.

^ + V2004 LOCKUP V4.0
is the newist version of the old utility Lockup which basically allows you to Lockup your hard drive with a password to enter and get it going again.

^ + V2005 SHAPE SHIFTER 3.2
is a multitasking shareware Macintosh-2 emulator for the Amiga. It allows you to run mac software without additional hardware. New updated verion.

^ + V2014 MESSY SID 3.0
this is the latest verion of which will read and write PC Floppy disks 720k or 1.44 if your drive can take it.

^ + V2015 MOVIE MAKER 2.0 (AB)
have you ever wanted to create your own movie and see a flourish in the Oscars, then nows your chance.

^ + V2026 ROUTE PLANNER
Highway trip planner. Requires MUI 2.2

^ * V2051 DOPUS 5 EXTRAS VOL 1 (AB)
This set of disks contains a selection of new archives for use with DOpus v5.0. ArcByName - Arc-script for Dopus5 and Lha/LZX V1.0. Dopus511 - Patch for Directory Opus 5.0 & 5.10 -> 5.11. DOpusLhaARexx2 - Handles LhA archives from DOpus. DOpusReg - DOpusReg.lha: Opus 5.11 fix for AFS problems. DOpus_CleanRAM - DOpus AREXX script for cleaning ramdisk. LhA/LZXDirDOpus5 - Modified LhaDir.dopus5 to work with lzxdir.dopus5. player5_Dopus5 - CDDA & soundplayers/saver for DirOpus5. xpkdopus - XPK support for DOpus5 (ARexx&Executable).

^ * V2060 GFFT SPECTRUM ANALYZER
GFFT Version 2.03 is the update to GFFT version 1.12. The GUI is improved considerably (allows any font and screen color setup, has progress indicator, uses tooltypes, etc.), more features are added, bugs are fixed, and a new SpectrumAnalysis.guide is included (with lots of pictures) to explain spectrum analysis.

^ * V2072 VIRUS_CHECKER V8.04
Best virus killer on the Amiga to date. Updated version with bug fixes and updated virus information.

MAGIC WORKBENCH & W/B

^ * V1043 SUPER DARK V2.1A
A screen blanker with some special features. It is similar to the After Dark screen blanker in the PC and Mac worlds. Features include a lot of different screen effects, a screen locker, and more.2

^ + V1964 COLOUR WORKBENCH
Allows you to basically change your workbench screen to purple or whatever colour you fancy. It also changes the font from the usual workbench one to one that is really small. There are icons which allow you to change the one's you already use to some they have. They have also included some backdrops for you to use.

^ + V1968 STAR TREK BACKGROUNDS
Heres some new backgrounds for workbench all based around the Star trek T:N:G series.

^ ^ V2045 ICONIAN v2.96
OS3.0 icon editor, NewIcon support.

^ + V2048 CALC
Arbitrary precision calculator/language

^ * V2053 BLITZBANK V1.53 [1.5MB]
is a very powerful personal accounts system and is ABank compatible. 1.53 fixes two important buggs of the version 1.52 I couldn't wait for having new features because these buggs were really too annoying.

^ + V2061 BERZBENCH V1.1C
Probably the best patterns for WB

^ * V2062 ICONOGRAPHICS V3.0
is a collection of eight colour icons for Workbench 2 and 3. All standard system icons are included, with many additional icons (PD/Shareware programs, different types of data, custom drawers, and ToolManager dock icons). This release includes about 350 high quality icons. Every icon contains an alternate image that is displayed when the icon is clicked on.

^ ^ V2063 MWB IMAGEDRAWERS FULL COLLECTION
This is a full MWB image drawers' collection, I added 42 new drawers since the first release (MWBDrws_474). I was tired of wastin' time every time I was searchin' for a particular image drawer, so I collected all the drawers I found on Aminet in a single collection. I hope this could be useful to someone else, but if you still prefer searchin' through all Aminet files... good luck!!

^ * V2064 100 USELESS PATTERNS
102 background patterns in 2, 4, 8 and 16 colors.

^ ^ V2068 JTE MAGICWB ICONS 5/6/7/8
JTE MagicWB Icons 5 - This package includes 90+ new MagicWB icons. JTE MagicWB Icons 6 - This package includes 37 new MagicWB icons, 1 WB pattern, 2 TMbrushes and 96 lame Pattern icons. JTE MagicWB Icons 7 - This package includes 60 new MagicWB icons. JTE MagicWB Icons 8 - This package includes 30+ new MagicWB icons.

^ ^ V2069 NEW BREATHTAKING PATTERNS FOR MAGICWB
This package contains 11 photo-realistic backgrounds: Beach.png, BricksGrey.iff, Clouds.png, Confetti.iff, Mountains.png, Pebble.iff, Storm.iff, Stucco.iff, Terrace.png, Thunder.png, Valley.png. You need a PNG-datatype and a program to adjust the first 16 colors of your Workbench to the right colors.

^ ^ V2070 MWB ICONS, PATTERNS
A collection of really nice MWB compatible stuff. Guide included.

PRO-SOFT

*** We have set up a Special Offer for you.**

If you want more details on any of the following disks or want information / prices for the registered versions ring PRO-SOFT on (0973) 702718.
(a) Each shareware version below comes with a £5.00 discount for the registered version.
(b) Each PRO-Soft disk can be purchased for £1.00 each or £4.00 for all 5 disks. (Please note our min order £10).
(c) Order over 20 normal PD-Soft disks and get all 5 Pro-Soft disks **"FREE-OF-CHARGE"**.

^ + V2073 PRO-LOTTERY 96
Don't believe that lottery prediction is possible? Have a look at Pro-Lottery, and you might find that you begin to think otherwise! It DOESN'T pretend to guarantee you a jackpot win, but it does genuinely improve your chances of regular small-medium wins. Ideal for syndicates or individuals.

^ + V2074 PRO-FOOTBALL
An extremely easy to use, yet powerful prediction system for use on both football pools and football fixed-odds. Evaluates each match, and presents you with the most likely outcome. (Amiga Shopper Star-Buy, Amiga Format Selection Of The Month)

^ + V2075 PRO-GAMBLE v2.2
An easy to use, yet surprisingly accurate, horse race prediction system. Requires little racing knowledge - just any daily newspaper and 20 minutes! Generates predictions in a useable format (eg: Placepot), and can even calculate your winnings for you!

^ + V2076 PRO-GREYHOUNDS
As Pro-Gamble, but for the dogs - Very user-friendly.

^ + V2077 BOOKIE BEATER
Ever been unsure as to which selection in an event you should back? Bookie Beater allows you to bet on more than one, safe in the knowledge that you'll make the same profit no matter which one wins! Can be used for any 'bettable' event.

EMULATORS

!+ V0817 A500 PLUS EMULATOR
Have amiga 500 and want workbench 2.0 then just install this disk onto your floppy 1.3 version of workbench or your HD for complete WB2 compatibility.

^ * V1178 KICKSTART 3 EMU
Kickstart 1.3/3.0 emulator and decibel patch program will give you the option to have kickstart 1.3 or 3.x(as used in NEW Amigas) in your Amiga. This is much enhanced over the version that was given away free.

^ + V1336 THE BBC EMULATOR
Contains commands to allow existing files to be transferred from a BBC with DFS by means of a serial cable.

^ + V1659 MSDOS/AMIGADOS V2.3
This is a very interesting utility which should be useful to anyone who uses both PCs and Amigas. The tool allows you to create a directory on which you can store MSDOS commands and then they can be used through the shell as if they were AmigaDos commands. Great.

^ ^ V1868 PC TASK V3.1
is the first and only software 80286 emulator for the Amiga range of computers. Transfer files between your Amiga and MSDOS. Compatible with MS Windows 3+

^ ^ V1931 ZXAM v2.0
The latest Spectrum Emulator available. Basically it allows you to run Spectrum software on your Amiga. Requires the AGA chipset but does require WB3+ and a 68020 CPU or better

^ * V2059 FRODO V2.0
Frodo is a multitasking freeware C64 emulator for the Amiga. OS2.1 and a 68020 (or better) are required, as well as copys of the original C64 ROMs, which are not included.

OFFICE & PRINT

^ + V0575 HOME BUSINESS PACK (6)
QED, Text editor. Text Plus 2.2E, Word Processor, AZSpell, Spell Checker & Dictionary. BBase, A Database program. DATA EASY, Another database. BitCalc, Loan calc. LCD, Calc. SPREAD, Spreadsheet. Budget, Personal Finance. UNITS, Various conversions. CLERK, Small business accounts. SUPERDUPER, FLASHERCOPY, Copier's. TYPIST, Typing Tutor. BOOTX, Virus Killer. SYSINFO, System analyser. DOSMANAGER, Directory program. FONTLIST, FONT MANAGER, Utilities. PRINT STUDIO, Printing Tools. (6 disks)

^ + V1114 PRINT LABELS UTLS
Includes various programs like DOC DUMP v2.1, ENVELOPE PRINT v1.20, INLAY MAKER v1.4, MC MASTER v1.1, BANNER v1.0, LABEL PRINT

^ + V1279 PRINT A CARD
Want to print a business card or any other type of card then this is the software for you.

^ + V1222 PANASONIC STUDIO
The PanaPlus driver is a software for controlling printers with the Commodore Amiga personal computer.

^ + V1236 INVOICE PRINTER
invoice printing that we help aid any small business.

^ + V0928 LITTLE OFFICE
Its the all rounder do everything, all knowing, all seeing?? Well lets just say its very good.

^ + V1179 FILE-O-FAX
was designed to enable computer operators to be able to work at their leisure without worrying about forgetting those important meetings,what they had to do on any particular day or locating business colleagues tele no's.

^ + V1467 AWARD CONSTRUCT
A very handy tool for creating your very own awards and certificates. There are many styles, fonts and graphics to choose from, could also be used to make small posters, signs or leaflets. Easy to use and very effective.

^ + V1069 PRINTER DRIVERS HP
Deskjet 550 colour driver, Deskjet 500, Deskjet 500c, Ricoh HP1200 400dpi, Canon LBP, Canon BJ300, BJ130, BJ10e, Canon_48, Canon PJ 1080a, HP Paintjet.

^ + V1278 MAIL-O-DEX
An excellent way to keep names, addresses, Phone numbers, comments etc and then print out labels loads of them in 1,2,3 and 4 columns.

^ + V1044 FANCY PRINTING
BANNER v1.4, GRAPH PAPER v1.2, DISK PRINT

^ + V1357 CITIZEN MANAGER
The Citizen Print Manager has been designed in conjunction with Irsecsoft.

^ * V1051 EASY CALC PLUS
is a spreadsheet designed to be both easy to use and fast. If the program looks nice, that wouldn't to be bad either. Unlike other software where the author writes the program first, then bolts on a help system, I have designed the help into the program from the beginning.

^ + V1184 AMIGA DIARY
Amiga Diary is a mouse driven diary capable of storing all personal events and the perfect solution to all those forgotten birthdays, missed appointments etc.

^ + V0366 600 BUSINESS LETTERS
Over 600 Standard business letters on this disk. Can be used as they are or insert parts into your own letters

^ + V0782 FORMS UNLIMITED
Designed to help you design and print different forms. There are a wide number of options and controls which allow you to draw simple boxes, lines, etc in order to create forms for many different purposes. Good.

^ + V0390 AMIGA FOX DTP
The first amiga PD Desk Top Publishing program. Excludes various extra features over the old Word processor, Text Editor, Graphics editor and loads more.

^ + V1680 AWARD MAKER 2
This is a very good tool for the creation and printing of Awards and certificates. There are hundreds of types to choose from then you can choose a font a border and also some of the text etc. Very good results.

^ + V1751 PRINTER DRIVERS
CANON600 v2.0; EPSON FX 850 v1.0 & LX 800, HP4DRIVER v35.8, HP4LSETTER v2.01

^ + V1858 DB V2.5
Small/fast database program that I wrote after having tested numerous other PD database programs and always found something lacking or irritating me. They might have dozens of features not found in db, but they lacked font sensitivity and a standard GUI look & 3.0

^ + V1862 INVOICE DATABASE V2
Intro is a rather simple, but therefore easy to use database program that was especially designed to deal with invoice information. Everybody, as we like it

^ + V1865 LEGAL FORM GENERATR
Generates custom do it yourself legal forms. Database includes forms useful for EVERYONE, plus specialised forms for real estate, small businesses, landlords, employers, etc. Can save you THOUSANDS.

^ + V1995 BEGINNERS TYPING TUTOR
This is by far the best typing tutor for years I have seen on the Amiga. It is worth every single penny. It consists of two games, one is called the letter game and the other one is called the word game. On the word game you have to type a word in before the timer runs out. A must for all typers.

^ + V2003 REM DATE V2.0
Rem Date is a calender, reminder and filofax all in one. I found it quite good to use and would definetly buy the registered version which is availble from the author.

^ + V2019 TEXT ENGINE v3.0
Allows you to make your every own letters and documents then print or store then on disc.

3D & GRAPHICS

^ + V1247 TEXTURE MAPS (ABC)
A collection of textures for use with the any program that will take high res textures.

^ ^ V1554 IMAGINE BUDDY (AB)
Here's some features of the new interface: Draggable and Sizeable text and index windows - Button Gadgets for the Search and Move functions Improved Searching The text is now positioned at matching hypertext links and all matches are highlighted for visibility.

^ * V1229 MAIN ACTOR V1.53
This is an all round animation utility that will create, playback, time and edit animations of any length or format (including graphics cards). Very good. (AB)

^ * V1811 IMAGESTUDIO V2.0 (AB)
is written for the casual graphics user who wishes to convert or manipulate various graphics formats on a modest Amiga system. There are several commercial offerings available, however the casual user is paying a lot of money for many facilities and options they would probably never use.

^ * V1891 IMAGEDESK V1.6
is a program to catalog picture directories by generating small representants of the pictures, so called thumbnails.

^ + V1907 POVRAY RAYTRACER
Renders in a window on a public screen (even Workbench) with colour sharing, simple HAM/HAM8 support autodetects Cybergfx Screen and renders in direct Colour (15/16/24Bit) if possible.

^ + V1916 XFIG V1.2
This is an Amiga port of an X11 structured drawing tool that lets the user interactively create and manipulate on objects such as lines/circles rectangles/splines/text and other elements. Xfig can produce output in several different formats: Encapsulated PostScript, IBMGL (HP/GL), Pic, PiCTeX, LaTeX, box, epic, eepic, eepicemu, textyl, tpic, X11 Bitmap, X11 Pixmap and gif.

^ + V1922 REAL 3D V2.X OBJECTS
Objects are pretty large in size, especially the 4 cylinder engine, you might run out of memory pretty fast. My Amiga 4000EC30 + FPU is now equipped with 18MB RAM, and I can now raytrace all of my objects.

^ + V1925 SPACEDOCK STATION
* 1.3Mb, so you'll need a healthy chunk of memory. * No Slicing was used in modelling, to keep things as small as possible. * Space Doors open using the new States function. * Marquee of Space Door lights.

^ + V2042 RAY STORM v1.11
Fast raytracer with many features

^ + V2046 SPLATTER PT v1.67
Awesome paint program has a PAL mod

^ + V2047 SVIEW v5.10
SuperView V5.10 + Library 12.2

^ + V2057 IMAGINE OBJECTS 1 (AB)
Contains a selection of objects and extras for Imagine - BLOBS_PRJ - Project to generate a blob animation. DAN_CLASSICAL - An Imagine 2.0 model of a classical guitar. DAN_ELECTRIC - An Imagine 2.0 model of an electric guitar. EAGLE_OBJECT - Eagle Freighter object for Imagine. MANGABABESDEMO - Sexy female human 3D models by Tomwoof. PZKPFWIV - Imagine Object of WWII Mark IV Tank. T65_X_WINGFULL - Large, Detailed Imagine 2.0 X-Wing object.

^ * V2065 IFF256 720*460, CHIPS, DISKS & FLOWERBED
IFF256 720*460, Chips, Disks & Flowerbed - Use as backgrounds with Scala or Euro-demos where text is put on top of a background/wallpaper etc.

^ + V2066 IFF256 720*460, GRAVEL, JEANS & WOODFENCE
To use as backgrounds with Scala or Euro-demos

^ + V2067 IFF256 720*460, PENNYS, SAND & SQUARES
To use as backgrounds with Scala or Euro-demos

COMMS

Why not check out our BBS support lines (0181) 2510078 call MYTH & MAGIC BBS.

^ * V1745 TERM V4.2 [030]
latest version of this very well known comms terminal program. Version 4 has even more features and although it is not for beginners it is probably the best available.

^ + V0979 NCOMM V3.0
Is a comms program based on Comm v1.34 with lots of very nice enhancements. Has new functions over v2.0

^ * V1722 AMIGA TO PSION S3/A
is a implementation of the Psion link protocol which is e.g. built into the Psion S3/S3a ROM. It's main purpose is to provide vice versa nfs like file access.

^ + V1852 FINALFAX 95
This is one of those arexx macros which are very handy for automating the more tedious jobs on your Amiga. This one allows you to select options for GPFax from within Final Writer. That means that there is no need to switch from Final Writer to Workbench.

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20 DISKS FOR £25 + £2.45 P&P

EDUCATION

^ + V1079 KEYBOARD TRAINER
This program only concentrates on basic keyboard skills, and is in effect, still a Beta Version, I think you will find it a vast improvement on most so called tutors.

^ + V0793 AMIGA BEGINNER
You asked for it! A tutorial for the beginner on using your amiga! Covers the CLI and Workbench, its great for learning about the Amiga. Also contains numerous beautiful 16 colour icons for WB v2.04.

^ + V1845 DPAINT 4 BUDDY (AB)
Will teach you how to use Dpaint 4. It works by running along side the well known paint package providing hands on demonstrations of the various features. It is a very good way of learning a program so you want to learn DPaint then this System is one of the best ways.

^ + V1881 AMIGATRAINER
very powerful & flexible program to learn foreign languages. You enter the words yourself, so they aren't related to any special language, school or book. every word there are 2 additions to enter.

^ ^ V1897 GEOGRAPHICAL ATLAS
AmiGlobe is a geographical atlas that allows you to navigate in the world map, zooming everywhere, get country data, etc. Requires 2Mb of RAM. (AB)

MUSIC

^ + V1269 THE OCTAMED TUTOR
Welcome to the Octamed Tutor, a simple guide through the basics of this excellent music program.

^ + V1207 OCTASTUFF
Welcome to OctaStuff, a disk based around work with OctaMED 3 and 4.

^ + V1882 ART OF NOISE TRACKER
NEW tracker, NO ProTracker Clone!, 8 channels, fm synthesis, drum sequencer, wave table synthesis.

TIPs, CHEATS & RELATED

^ + V1416 EYE OF THE BEHOLDERS
This disk contains a selection of utilities and software for Eye of the Beholder II, like end of level saved game file, Eye of Beholder 2 special quests explanation, EOB2 Character Editor, Eye of the Beholder Solution, GIF pictures of all 12 levels in Eye of the Beholder.

^ + V1363 RPG. ASSISTANT
AD&D play time dungeon master's assistant. The version you see here is a pre release of the program in AmigaBASIC. Right now it will take characters in a text file and load them in to be displayed at will. It also rolls dice and has a handy dandy encounter screen that will keep track of monsters & their current HPs

^ ^ V1687 (AGA) FIXES VOL 1
This program disk will help AGA machine users get some added compatibility out of their older software. Don't forget many supposedly incompatible programs will work on the AGA machines by suitable adjustment of the boot options. (Hold down both mouse buttons).

^ + V1773 ACTION REPLAY CHEAT
This disk has on it a text file which contains loads of codes for those people who have action replay devices. There are cheats for hundreds of games. Good.

^ + V1848 DIY REKO
This disk has on it an Arexx macro which, when used in conjunction with ImageFX, will make reko cardsets for Klondike AGA almost automatically. Also included is a detailed Amiga Guide document explaining everything.

^ + V1468 GAMES HD INSTALL
This disk provides you with the software needed to install certain games onto your A1200. The games that this disk can install are BodyBlows, Goal, Lemmings 2, Superfrog, and Walker. Could be very useful.

^ + V1662 HD GAMES INSTALLER 2
Contains a variety of hard disk installer's for a few well known commercial games. These games are as follows: AlienBreed 2 AGA, Jungle Strike, Assassin (Special Edition), Body Blows, Goal, Ishar 2, Zool 2 AGA, Ruff and Tumble, Body Blows 2 AGA, StarDust, Super Frog, Walker, Rise of the Robots, Bubble and Squeak, ElfMania, Aladdin AGA and Mortal Kombat 2. Great.

^ + V1885 NEW HD INSTALL
Hard Drive Install scripts for 3 games, Beneath a steel sky Flashback King's Quest VI. New updated version (small bugs fixed from last version).

^ + V1988 DUNGEON MAPPER V0.3
This is the first version of something called Dungeon Mapper. It will work on Workbench 2+. It allows you to design your own maps for games like Dungeons and Dragons which can be very usefull. It also has Tetris on it if you boot it from Workbench.

^ + V1994 CHEATS COMPILATION
This disk is a demo which gives you a taster of what you can have if you buy the registered version. The demo gives you a choice of about 15 games to chose from.

^ + V2040 SW CHEAT v4.5
Over 950+ game hints/cheats.

^ + V2041 F1GP Ed v3.03
Formula One Grand Prix / WC Editor & F1GP-Ed non-english translation files & Track data for GPDisplay

^ + V2055 PATCHES FOR FINALWRITER V4.0 020/030
FinalWriter-030 Patch v4.0 - Release 2 - This patch speeds up FinalWriter 4.0 on all 68020/30/40/60 machines, so things like font rendering and internal arithmetic will be up to 400% faster! FinalWriter-030 Patch v4.0. Release 3 - This patch speeds up FinalWriter 4.0 on all 68020/30/40/60 machines, so things like font rendering and internal arithmetic will be up to 400% faster!.

^ + V2056 TREK-THE GUIDE V1.6
Trek-The.guide is a complete Star Trek Database. It contains a listing of all the Trek series' complete with an episode synopsis, original airdate, Director and Writer Credits and Guest stars. It also includes a section on very rare promotional press kits and values of them. There are cross references to episodes with you favorite aliens, time travel, and much more! Much of the information was supplied by Paramount. The full version (7 disks Shareware) contains over 170 rare promotional pics. Sorry: Contains the 1st seasons of the Trek series'.

VIDEO

^ + V1196 DESKTOP VIDEO
Dot Matrix Stroller, Is a video titling program intended for use in adding scrolling captions to video's. Flood Effect loads an IFF picture and displays it with a Oflood effect0 so that it floods the screen.

^ * V1156 VIDEO TITLER
Generates professional looking TV titles and credits for your own video's Outstanding abilities are very smooth scrolling, colour slides (AGA support)and usage of colour fonts. Limited demo version only.

GAMES

^ ^ 4431 BEST AGA TETRIS
Best pentamino tetris. graphics, musics, 100% assembler

^ + 4434 BLACKDAWN v2.1
3-level Dungeon Master style Alien Breed:- charge around the maze levels, shoot lots of aliens, find the lift & move on. but do it in 1st person perspective view.

^ + 4442 SCORCHED TANKS V1.85
The awesome artillery tank game. This one contains loads of goodies like 70 weapons and 13 shield types as well as new goodies.

^ ^ 4449 PSSST
This is a 1990's version of the old Spectrum Classic PSSST Main features include: - 256 Colours. - Real Time frame rate. - No C code !!!! (I Hate C) - Nice end of game sequence. - Three Levels of play (Slow, Normal, TURBO NUTTER), No Spam.

^ + 4451 LAST LAP
is a car game for one or two players. It is excellent in two player mode. There are about 10+ different tracks for you to race around. Some of them are quite easy at the start but as you go on they get a lot harder. On the tracks they have these squares which if you drive over it shoots you on even faster they you are already going.

^ + 4452 SPELL TRIS
Tetris style game but the main difference is you use letters instead of just shapes.

^ + 4454 BATTLE TRUCKS
is a one or two player game in which you choose your own truck and then buy it. You can add nitros, new motors or even buy a brand new truck with your winnings from your races.

^ ^ 4457 SCREECH V1.5
This demo one offers you the opportunity to run anything smaller than your car over! Improved graphics are on the way (whoopee)!. Req 020's with 1MB chip ram and .5MB fast ram or 030's with 1MB chip ram or 700kb chip ram and 300 kb fast RAM.

^ + 4459 SUPER EARTH DEFENSE V1.5
is a classical shooting game.

^ + 4462 XASTEROIDS
This is a 'port' of xasteroids, an X11 application. No X11 server (DaggeX or others) is needed to run the program! This program is using libX11 by Terje Pedersen! You don't need this either since it is a link library that is compiled into the binary.

^ + 4463 BOULDERDASH 64
A complete OS-friendly (multitasking) Boulder-Dash with C64 graphics and sounds. 68020+, AGA only (DblNTSC required), KS V39, asl.library, powerpacker.library. Smooth scrolling 1275(!) original C64 levels+sounds, Cheats, Joystick and keyboard control, User definable games and levels, two player game.

^ + 4464 BREAKIN' BRIKS V1.0
Great version of the very cool Breakout type game. For AGA Amigas only. Works with 2Mb CHIP memory! - Improved performance with FAST mem. Great GFX.

^ + 4465 CHAMPIONSHIP MANAGER EDITOR V2.4 68020+
This is the first public release of Championship Manager Editor (CmEd). It was written because we had played the game to death and were looking for a way of putting some interest back into game.

^ ^ 4466 DPACMAN AGA
15 levels and 5 bonus levels. The registered version has 50 levels and 15 bonus levels and extra gfx and other improvements. Features: Can use external Protracker modules and XPK for packed modules.

^ + 4467 JOUSTER 3
If you haven't heard of the good old favorite, Joust, then you're a pretty young or fairly old dude. :) Anyway, this game brings Joust to the Amiga and also has improvements such as powerups, etc. You can even have a pterodactyl as a steed. For 1 or 2 players. Check it out.

^ + 4468 PATCH LEMMINGS 2 TO RUN FROM HD
Patch to allow Lemmings2 to run from hard drive.

^ + 4469 CRITICAL HIT
is a highly detailed fantasy combat game, which re-creates tabletop war gaming on the Amiga (requires 1 MB RAM). A strategic war game with excellent graphics, 3 D landscapes and a wide variety of fantasy combat figures and scenery - Campaign and map designer.

^ + 4470 PANIC SOCIETY V1.1
Hillery & her friends have taken total control of the world. as one of some 10 million people left, scheduled for transfering to the country of your origin. But, someone has tampered with your environmental control causing you to awaken from a mind controlled state.

^ + 4471 BRATWURST
A Roketz-like game for two to four players. Automatic zoom keeps all players in view in the least possible area, vector graphics.

^ + 4472 CULTURE TANK
A single screen tank combat game with up to 6 tanks, which may be human or computer controlled. Team or all-against-all modes. 3 types of weapon including missiles and flamethrowers.

^ + 4473 TURBO LIGHT CYCLES
3 player 'Tron' game, with editor. By Vaughan Roberts

^ + 4477 WIZZYS QUEST
is the best PD platform/puzzle game I have EVER played, so despite its bugginess (see below) I thought I'd upload it to Aminet. Wizzys Quest has 50 levels, getting progressively harder.

^ + 4478 BIACCOARCHIVE! V1.0
Nibbler arcade clone by Maurizio Facca.

^ + 4479 BOB THE AMAZING LEMON
Amazing Pac Man clone which features a level editor, changeable music and many different wall and floor types including appearing walls, ice and water.

^ + 4484 REBELLION
is a very good shoot em up. You are a little spaceship which travells around space trying to pick up little aliens and destroying all the missles that are coming at you.

^ + 4485 LEGEND POUNDS ISLAND
Here we have an adventure game. Half graphical, half text based this game is played almost entirely using the mouse. Sprites /backdrops with objects to examine or use

^ + 4486 MASH
An excellent game. You choose to control either a Spud (a potato on legs!) or a Tank. You then need to tackle a whole load of obstacles in order to get the enemy on the other side. Great graphics, great sound an allround classy.

^ + 4488 PSYCHEUAL
An Alien Breed clone. You are a bloke with a machine gun who has to run about each level shooting other people and aliens. The level graphics are good and show a lot of detail plus the gameplay is not too easy either.

^ + 4552 H.E.R.O
Something is going to happen. A big interactive event is going to take place. We are about to release a game which we had to miss for a long time now (too long if you ask me!). Coming soon is an Amiga version of the old Activision game H.E.R.O. And that's not all. You can be a part of its release.

^ + 4553 ARMORED COMBAT EDITION
Full version of pete w storonskij'S mangled fenders: Armored Combat Edition! Drive tanks from six different countries in a demo-derby game with weapons! This FULL VERSION is freely distributible, as long as all files are intact and present. Uses Memory Conservation Protocols to make sure the game will run on low memory

^ + 4554 BLOODFEST
Captive & HiredGuns style 3d adventure

^ + 4555 TRAIN DRIVER SIM V1.6
Profile chart generated in real time showing next 10 miles - Fog, in addition to Dry/Wet - visibility 100 yards, very slippery rail - Data updated and more crossovers added between Crewe and Carlisle - Key press detection improved - Now creates timings for any custom train : If, on the Startup screen, you type in a different Code from the built-in trains in the Save drawer, and then set all other parameters, and then click OK, the program will look in. Trains/ and see if a file exists for that train.

^ + 4556 ZHANDULINHELMI ADV
A Finnish text adventure with some graphics and atmospheric music

^ + 4557 POWEROIDS V1.2
Multitasking Asteroids, raytraced gfx, 1-4 Players.

^ + 4558 INTMERCS
Rebelstart type strategy game. Requires 2MB. For one or two players. Complete with four scenarios.

^ ^ 4559 WORMS MAPS
These are a buncha maps me and my flatmates made for the amiga version of worms... Descriptions as follows :- TUNNEL.WRM Underground warfare. ISLANDS.WRM Ninja Rope-tastic!. SCREAM.WRM Version of pic i found on AMFormat Gallery. TRIPINTOWAR.WRM Wierd, spacy theme, with shafted palette (Was called NECROMUNDA.WRM in previous release). NECROMUNDA.WRM Ohh..You'll LOVE this one. BEN2.WRM Another shafted palette. But kewl though.

^ + 4560 DUNGEON HERO
Fantastic RPG like Dungeon Master

^ + 4561 ELDRITCH V1.35
Top-view adventure hack-and-slash.

CODE REFERENCES

^+ Works on all machines
^* Req Workbench 2.0 or above
^^ Req Workbench 3.0 or above
(ABC) Product has ABC disk (ie. three)

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Get Serious

What's in store in this month's serious reviews section? Let our technical editor reveal all. (No, thanks - ED)

Horgan's Organ



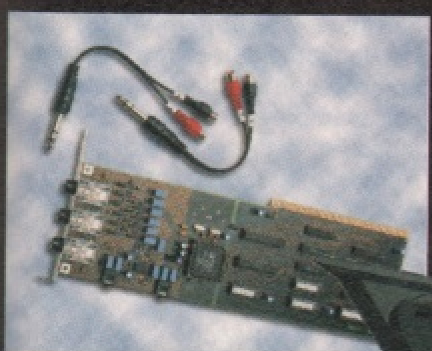
In terms of hardware and software reviews, this month, there's a definite swing towards sound and music this month, with a no-nonsense test of the Toccata 16-bit sound card, a preview of OctaMED SoundStudio (the review will be along shortly) and Aural Synthetica to boot!

There's plenty of healthy activity in other areas too, with the SX32 CD32 upgrade, a new video titler in the shape of Limelight Tyro and another solution for A1200 owners with big ideas in the shape of HiQ's Power Station.

Only last month I was getting all dewey eyed about the lack of innovation on the PD demo scene, when what should turn up but a corking batch of audio-visual weirdness from The Party 95 demo competition. This competition was held on December 95 in Denmark and demo creators around the world entered theirs in a bid to see whose was the best! You'll find a selection of the best of these on the CD edition of this month's magazine, including the amazing 80Mb Dataworld extravaganza (yes, 80Mb!). It feels good to be able to indulge in the sort of luxuries a cover-mounted CD allows!

All this, plus an extra large CD-ROM roundup. Enjoy!

Tony Horgan
Technical Editor

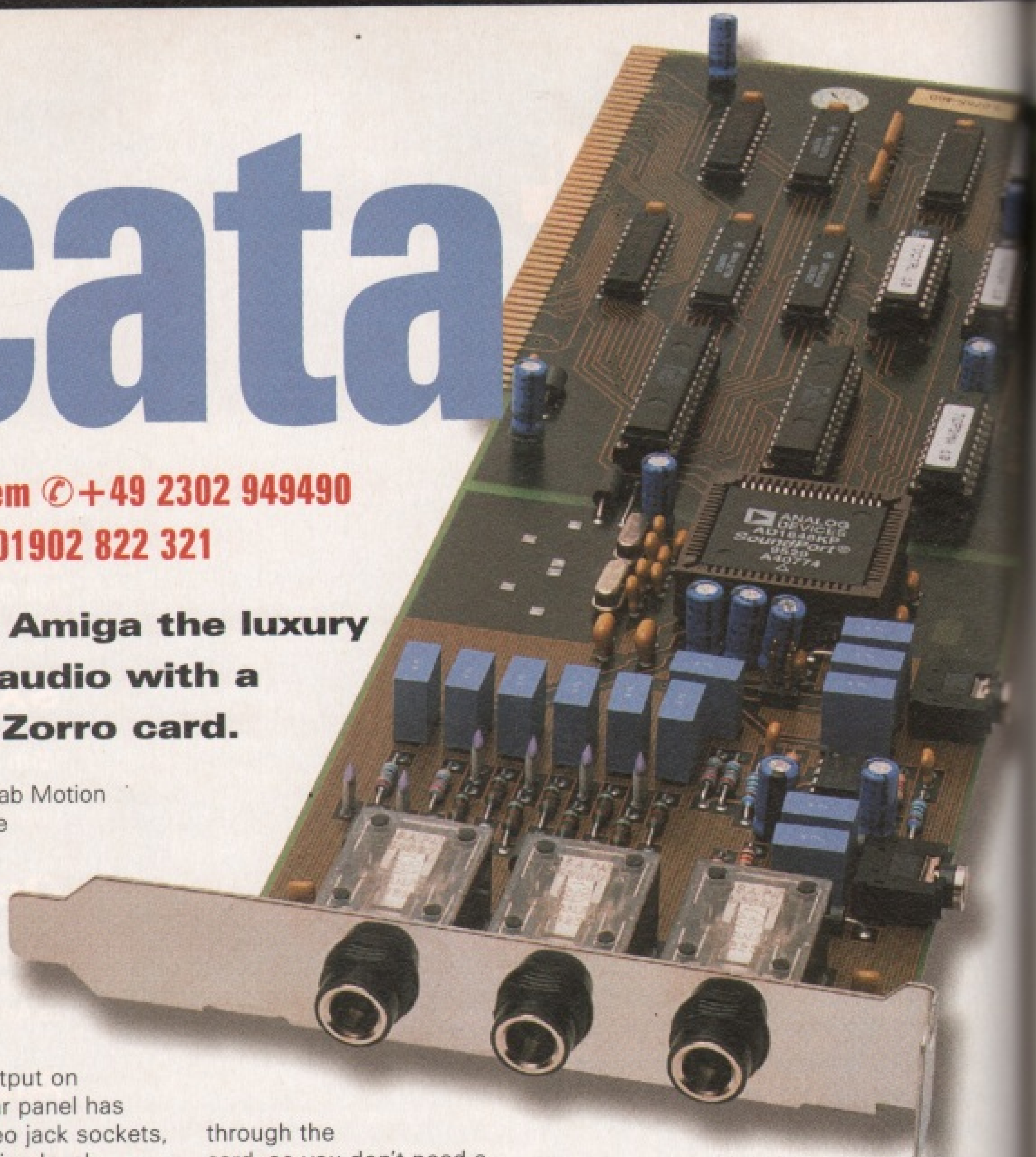


Toccata p66



SX32 p66

Toccata



■ Price: £299 ■ Developer: MacroSystem ✆+49 2302 949490
■ Supplier: White Knight Technology ✆01902 822 321

Give your Amiga the luxury of 16-bit audio with a nice new Zorro card.

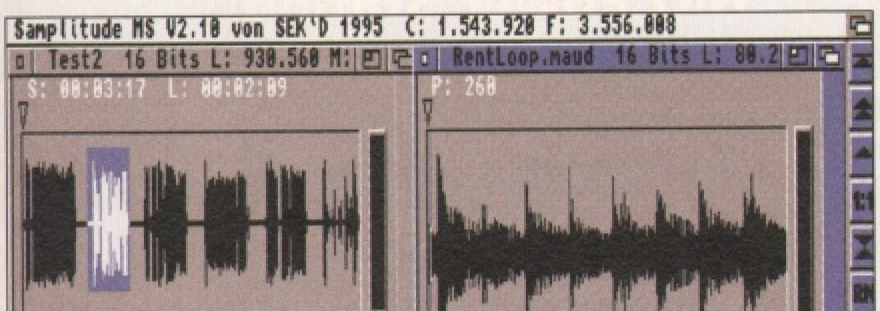
It's been the dream of many Amiga users that one day they their beloved Paula chip will be superseded by some state of the art audio hardware with a minimum of 16-bit bandwidth to play with, perhaps even 24 or 32 bits. Until that dream becomes reality there will be a place for third party audio upgrades, such as Toccata from German developers MacroSystem.

Digital video

Toccata is a card for all Amigas with Zorro slots running OS 2 and above. It can sample and replay a single channel of 16-bit stereo digital audio at frequencies up to 48KHz, working from Fast RAM or directly from a hard drive (or any device with a fast enough transfer rate, such as a Zip). It's been designed for use in multimedia and audio mastering work, in which case the card acts as a digital recorder, rather than a sampler in a musical context. Specifically it hooks up to MacroSystem's V-Lab Motion video card to create a complete digital video editing system.

Ins and outs

There are four inputs and one output on the board. The rear panel has three 6.5mm stereo jack sockets, two of which are line level inputs, the remaining one is the line level output. Located on the inside edge of the card are two 3.5mm jack sockets, one set up for line level input, the other for mic input. There's an option to mix the input with the Toccata output. The idea behind this is that you can have your Amiga's standard audio channels piped through the card, so you don't need a mixer. The relative levels of the channels can be controlled from a software mixing desk.



▲ **Samplitude MS 2.1 comes bundled with Toccata, offering hard disk recording and sequencing features, along with a good selection of basic sample editing functions and support for plenty of sample formats.**

Supplied software

Two disks of software are supplied with the Toccata. The basic Toccata control tools include a mixing desk front end that allows you to set the relative volumes of the inputs and output, the sampling rate, and the sample bandwidth (8 or 16-bit). From here you can also select A-Law or µ-Law compression, which allows for near 16-bit sound quality using roughly the same amount of disk space as an 8-bit sample. For example, 8-bit bandwidth has a noise ratio of 48dB, 16-bit has a noise ratio of 96dB, while A-Law or µ-Law can achieve a 70dB noise ratio. This optional compression is handled on the fly in real time during recording and playback.

Simple recording and replaying tools are also included which can also be remotely controlled via ARexx. Finally there are some bits and pieces for anyone who wants to develop their own software to control the card.

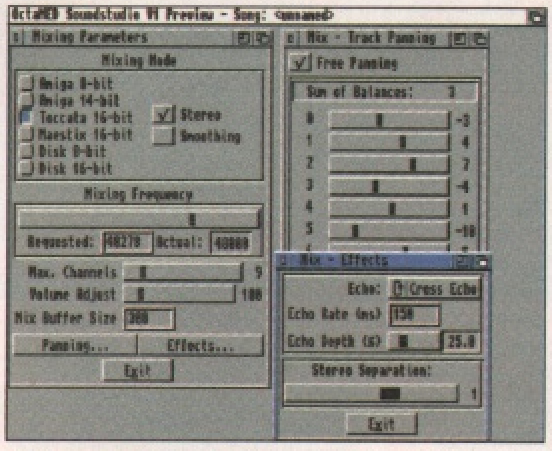
Samplitude is the main editing software. This allows sampling direct to disk and comes with a good selection of basic editing functions, but is light on effects processing tools. Fortunately both Samplitude and the Toccata Tools can be used to control the board simultaneously. For example, you can monitor an incoming signal prior to sampling from within Samplitude, drag the screen down and adjust the input gain levels from the Toccata Tools panel, with the results taking immediate action. There's also a playlist section which can be used to string together a sequence of samples.

MacroSystem are currently working on new software that will feature simultaneous recording and playback through the card, along with 'multiplexing' routines that allow for a number of channels to be output at the same time.

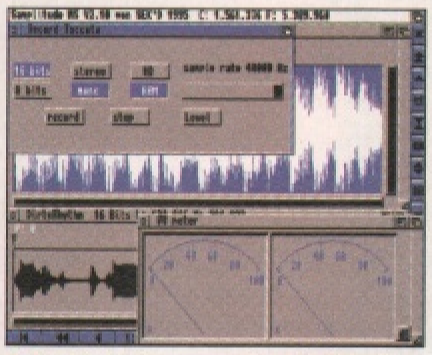
Sound quality

On the surface it would seem that the sound quality should be equal to a well recorded CD and that is generally the case. If you're used to wrestling with the

noise and distortion inherent in 8-bit samples, moving up to 16 bits is a real pleasure. For example, 16 bits give ample bandwidth for you to use subtle effects such as reverb without introducing a load of 'stepping' noise, as the steps are much finer. For the same reason, you can sample a long 808 bass drum, filter out any top end noise, and you'll be left with a very clean pure bass sound. Try that with an 8-bit sample and you'll be stuck with a phasing high frequency content on the decay tail.



▲ 48KHz 16-bit output and stereo panning for each track is possible with Toccata and the new OctaMED SoundStudio.



▲ Samplitude offers a range of sampling formats, recording to either RAM or a hard drive.

Good potential

Frequency response seems to be up to scratch, although in our tests the bottom end of some samples lacked a little definition in places when compared back-to-back with the source CD sound. There is a slight click every time the Toccata begins to play a sample and another straight afterwards. This isn't too intrusive if you are mixing it with Amiga audio and would not matter too much if you were using the card to spool one continuous long sample in an audio-visual context. This does not happen for each sample when using SoundStudio's mixing mode, as the Toccata is only 'opened' at the start of the song and 'closed' at the end. See the Third Party Support panel for more details on this. Overall the sound quality is excellent.

One of the reasons Toccata has not been widely used as a musical tool in the past is that it can only replay sounds at one of 14 preset sample rates ranging from 5513Hz to 44100Hz (CD rate) and 48000Hz. Therefore there are not enough steps in between to be able to replay a tuned instrument sample as a melody, although the new SoundStudio works around this. However, with sample rates that include 32000Hz (the same as the Akai SO1 entry level MIDI sampler), 44100 (the rate used for mastering CDs) and 48000 (another popular rate) it has many potential uses for digital mastering and editing samples from external sources. This could be very handy considering the editing software on many hardware samplers is very basic.

Conclusion

Toccata is more versatile than it first seems. If you're on the look-out for a 16-bit sampler you've probably already got a good idea of what you want it to do, whether it's hard disk audio mastering, realtime music applications, audio for video and multimedia or editing samples for use with external MIDI gear. It's capable of handling all of those jobs competently, some better than others. It's already proven itself as a worthy companion to V-Lab Motion but its increasing support from third party software developers has opened up its potential market to thousands of Amiga musicians (there's even a Toccata driver available for DeliTracker). While technically it doesn't compare very favourably to the current PC sound card market (dominated by multitimbral boards with onboard effects and more), in which light may look a little overpriced with just a single stereo output channel, it's in a very different marketplace so direct price to power comparisons aren't really relevant.

This won't solve all your audio problems overnight but it's quite a capable system for a number of specific audio applications, including digital audio mastering for example. For digital video work it's by far the best value audio solution, and the excellent support from OctaMED SoundStudio also makes it a tempting proposition for musicians. With more powerful software on the way from MacroSystem, the future looks very bright. ■

Tony Horgan

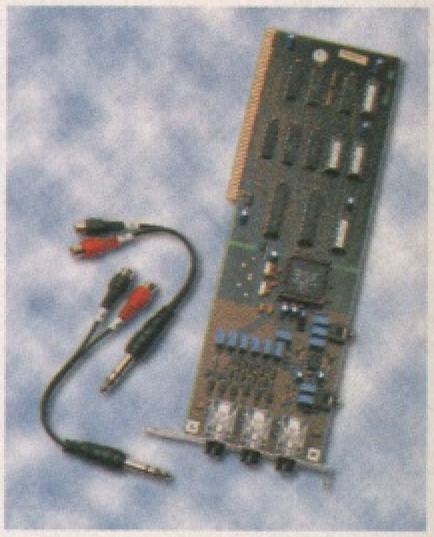
Third party support

Although Toccata was designed mainly for multimedia users rather than musicians, it is now well supported by OctaMED SoundStudio. One of the new features of SoundStudio is its ability to retarget its tracks of samples to alternative output devices. Instead of driving the Paula chip directly, it can now process all of the sample data as the module plays, mix the combined result into a stereo signal and push it out through the Toccata's 48kHz 16-bit output.

Up to 32 tracks of samples can be played at once and each track can be panned to its own independent stereo position. Realtime Echo effects are also available. The resulting sound quality on an Amiga equipped with a 50mHz 68030 processor sounds very slightly grainy compared to a high quality standard four channel Amiga module. The quality you get will depend on the speed of your Amiga and the amount of available RAM.

SoundStudio also allows you to play a single channel of stereo or mono 16 bit Toccata samples in normal four-channel mode. The Toccata output is much cleaner in this mode. However, in this mode the replay pitches of the Toccata samples are limited to those listed in the specifications box elsewhere on these pages. In effect this means that in this mode you cannot play melodies with Toccata instrument samples, as there is not enough flexibility in the replay rates.

Back on the multimedia side, there's support from MediaPoint, Scala and Bars and Pipes. The ARexx ports of the Toccata software also means that you can use it with programs that don't have built-in Toccata features.


▲ Toccata comes with a minimal selection of leads to allow connect to your sound source and amplifier or mixer.

Technical specifications

Inputs:	3 stereo line, 1 stereo microphone
Outputs:	1 stereo
Modes:	8 bit, 16 bit, A-Law, μ-Law (all mono or stereo)
Input impedance (line):	47k
Input impedance (mic):	47k
Output impedance:	470
Input Amplitude (line):	0.3 - 3V
Input amplitude (mic):	10 - 300 mV
Max output amplitude:	2.2V
Dynamic range:	95dB approximately
Frequency response:	10Hz - 20kHz (0dB level, +0/-0.5dB)
Sample frequencies:	5513, 6615, 8000, 9600, 11025, 16000, 18900, 22050, 27429, 32000, 33075, 37800, 44100, 48000 Hz

TOCCATA

A500 A500+ A600 A1200 A1500 A2000 A3000 A4000

system requirements: Amiga with Zorro slots, OS 2 or above, 1Mb Chip RAM, 2Mb fast RAM hard drive.

ease of use 90%
Simple installation, good controller software supplied.

performance 80%
Basic specs but third party software gives it a big boost. Fine for video work.

value for money 70%
Not an awful lot for your money considering there is just one stereo output.

OVERALL
Competent in a variety of audio applications.
82%

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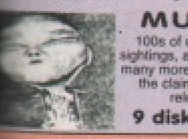
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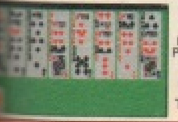
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X28 KATHY LLOYD
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X98 HOT BABE 3
X99 HOT BABE 4
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SX32

If you've bought a CD32 but feel limited. Why not turn it into an A1200? The SX32 provides the solution ...

■ **Price: £199/£299** ■ **Developer: DCE Computers** ■ **Supplier: Visage © 0115 964 2828**

When the CD32 was launched it was intended to be a true blue, straight down the line, no frills games console. It was 32-bit, had a CD-ROM drive and was allegedly the future of gaming. But it was something else too. Underneath that dark grey exterior, that toilet seat lid, behind the facade of Joystick one and Joystick two ports lay the guts of a standard, 2Mb AGA Amiga 1200.

On the back of the CD32 there is a little screw-on door. Go on, take a look. This door opens to reveal a large empty space with a 72 pin connector built in. In the old days of exuberant optimism this port was most famous for allowing the Commodore FMV card to be attached, with all the Start Trek, Terminator and Jurassic Park CD film hilarity this entailed. Unfortunately the big C didn't get very far with the FMV card before going bust: it barely got past prototype stage. Some say this was a good thing, Phil Collins was about to release a 'Best Of' album on Video CD around the time they went belly up. What was that about clouds and silver linings?

SX1 shortfalls

However, it had one other expansion: Paravision's SX1. This was a large metal box similar in colour to the CD32, with a socket which could be attached to its 72 pin connector and it was designed to fit flush with the back of the console, forming a sort of L shape. It was a God-send for those who needed a computer as well as a console, especially those who like their games to look better than average – it had an RGB port. It also had serial and parallel ports, a floppy disk drive port, facility for a standard PC keyboard and space for an internal IDE hard drive. However, the SX1 must have been designed with the CD lid closed all the time, because whenever you perform the simple task of flipping the CD lid open it jogs the SX1 slightly which could cause problems, such as instant crashes. The other disadvantage is that it plugs onto the side of the CD32, making for a rather awkward sprawling desktop setup.

SX32 solutions

The SX32 is designed by rival German company CDE to overcome these problems and it does so in the most logical way: using all that empty space I talked about inside the CD32. It attaches to the same port but the circuit board is housed inside the CD32 instead of the SX1's external metal casing. Like the SX1 there is also provision for a hard drive to be fitted and this is inside too.

All that sticks out of the back of your CD32 is a 1 centimetre protrudence painted in the usual brand of attractive Commodore Grey. This houses the five sockets that connect the SX32 to the outside world. These are Serial, Parallel, Disk Drive, RGB and, unusually, VGA. Unlike the SX1 the serial port is standard Amiga 25-pin as opposed to the PC 9-pin standard.

The inclusion of a VGA output is useful for direct connection to a VGA monitor but the outputs are not buffered which means that it's not really practical to use the RGB and VGA outputs simultaneously. Technically, if you wanted to you could view what's on your CD32 using the composite output too and the RF.

It's also worth noting that you will need a PC monitor capable of handling the Amiga's horizontal and vertical scan rates if you intend to use the VGA output, which, in the case of the AGA CD32 is 15-30 KHz and 48-73Hz respectively. This means that many PC VGA monitors will not work and you should be aware of this if you own one and think that the SX32 would slot in nicely in front of it.

Starting up

Installing the SX32 is a tad more complicated than the SX1, mainly because you have to unscrew and open up the CD32. This voids the warranty but



▲ The SX32 makes very little cosmetic difference to your CD32, but once you add peripherals the scene changes drastically. A disk drive is pretty essential (the slimline BFC HD model used above suits the CD32's colour too), as is an A4000 keyboard and a mouse. Visage will supply a keyboard and disk drive (not this one) as part of an expanded package.

you'll be lucky if you've still got one at this stage, so this is not much of a problem. Technically speaking if you were only installing the board without a hard drive, you could just jam it in; but this is no way to treat £200 worth of kit. With the cover off the CD32 it simply and easily slots into the 72-pin connector and the circuit board sits on top of the metal shielding covering the CD32's circuitry. Rubber feet are at both ends of the board to allow it to rest securely on here. You can then replace the top of the console and, hey-presto, everything's back to normal.

One of the other top class reasons for having an SX32, apart from the keyboard, mouse and Workbench it gives you access to is that it enables you to insert RAM and a hard drive. 4-8Mb of 72-pin Simm inside it will not only help you down the path of productivity but it will speed your games up in a way you never imagined – even standard CD32 games. It really helps games like Alien Breed 3D, which are almost too sluggish for words on the standard CD32.

Accelerator?

One of the biggest improvements the SX32 could have had over the SX1 was provision for an accelerator. You can add up to 16Mb of RAM but there's no substitute for an upgraded processor as well. This is where an SX32 equipped CD32 really falls short of its A1200 cousin. You're limited to the standard 14MHz 68020 and there's no way out. Even taking size limitations into account a motherboard upgrade to the 28MHz 020 currently used in 1220 accelerators would have been welcome. But sadly none of this has happened.

Getting connected

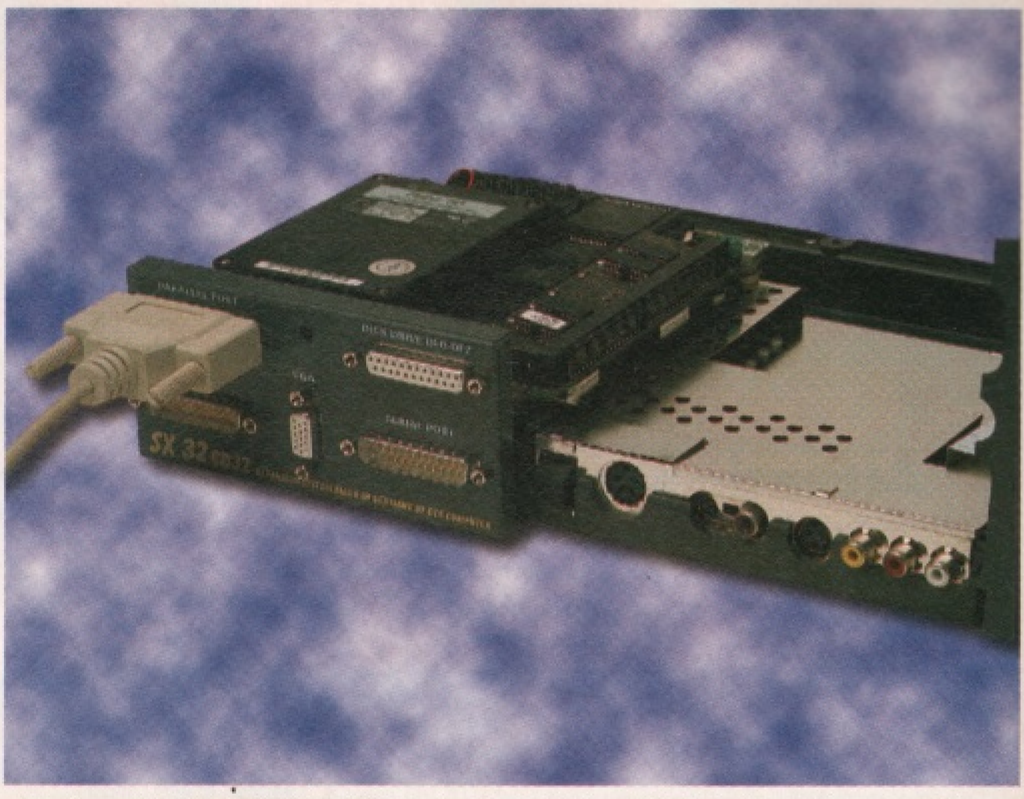
I tested the SX32 with all manner of software, both from CD, disk and Hard Disk. And it worked perfectly with everything. Unlike an A1200 with a CD-ROM drive you really do have the best of both worlds here: all CD32 and Amiga CD-ROM titles will work, without exception. And like an A1200 you can connect a printer, run business software, use a modem and surf the net; the choice is yours. But the inevitable trade off is that some applications do require acceleration to run at an acceptable speed and there is only so much speed that extra fast RAM will give you.

Also, you must remember that it's not just an SX32 you need, you'll also have to invest in a keyboard, a mouse, an external disk drive and Workbench software. If you already have an Amiga of some sort you'll have the mouse and Workbench and maybe an external drive but the keyboard isn't as straightforward as it was in the SX1. With that unit you could use an old standard PC AT keyboard. These cost £15-£25 new and I've picked one up before for a fiver secondhand (with a PC believe it or not!). The SX32 has no separate keyboard input so you have to use the PS2-style port on the CD32 itself (beside the joypad ports). PC PS2 keyboards will plug in fine but won't work, so the only option is to purchase a rare and very expensive replacement A4000 model. Bummer.

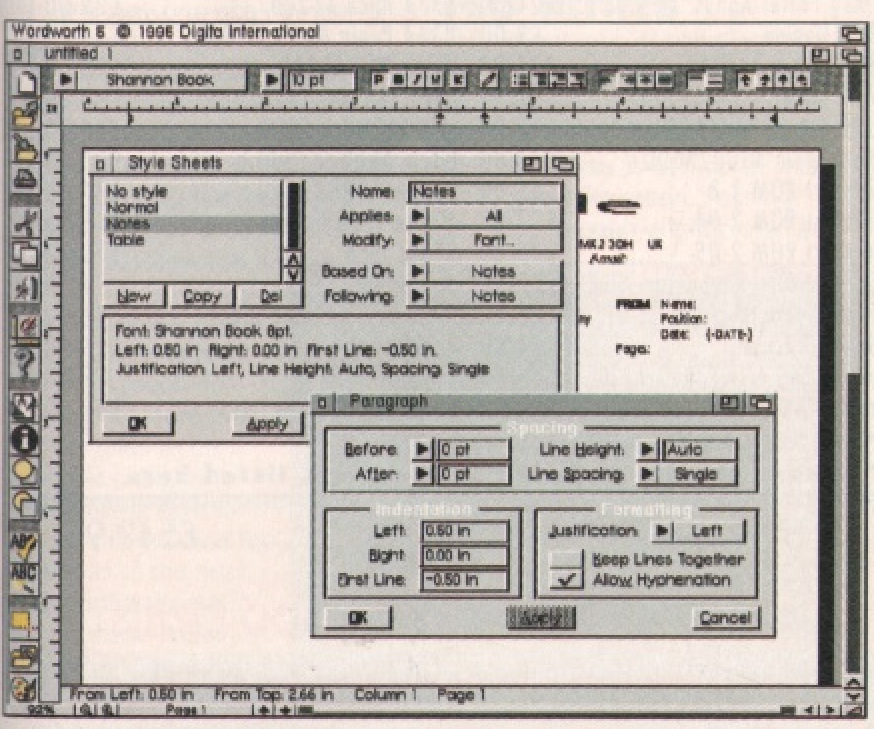
Luckily Visage intend supplying the SX32 with both an external drive and a compatible keyboard, but not Workbench, which is proving difficult to source. You can still run autobooting disks and many CDs boot into Workbench and you can continue to use this. But there is no substitute for the real thing and sooner or later you'll need part of the Workbench system that's not on whatever you're booting off. The keyboard and external drive bump the price up to £299, so hunt around for an old A4000 keyboard first if you're serious.

So is it better than the SX1 then? Well it depends on your priorities. Scanning the ads (and I can only find one for the SX1 in last month's mag) I make it slightly cheaper than this unit at the moment. It costs £8 less than Visage are quoting for the SX32 and although a decent disk drive will set you back the best part of £50 for either peripheral, using the AT port you will save more than a couple of quid on a cheap PC keyboard. On the other hand you might want something that actually fits snugly inside your CD32, rather than a cumbersome external box, and one which has a standard Amiga serial port as opposed to a PC one. You might also want a real Amiga keyboard with the proper keymaps and names, not some cheap, confusing alternative (an AT jacked Amiga keyboard will almost be as expensive as an A4000's). The difference in price is, in the final analysis, only one of around £20-£30. Both SX1 and SX32 are up to the task of turning a toy into a valuable computer tool, the SX32 just does it in a neater way. ■

Alan Dykes



▲ See how neatly the SX32 fits inside the CD32's box. Ours has a hard drive and 4Mb RAM, which really does make a difference to this modified CD32 or, indeed, any A1200. Provision for an accelerator and PCMCIA would have been real icing on the cake.



▲ A word processor and a printer will make you realise just how much your console has turned into a real computer. You can now use serious applications off disk or CD, surf the net, or program your own games.



▲ Alien Breed 3D is just one of the CD32 games which benefit from the speed boost of fast RAM.

SX32

CD32 A500 A500+ A600 A1200 A1500 A2000 A3000 A4000

system requirements: Will only work with CD32. Keyboard, external disk drive and mouse are necessary. Accepts up to 16Mb RAM on 72 pin single or double sided SIMMS and a hard drive.

ease of use......................93%
Easy to set up and then as easy to use as an A1200 – with the CD-ROM bonus.

performance......................87%
Greatly increases the CD32's performance but provision for an accelerator upgrade would have made it a Super Star.

value for money..............85%
Good value if you have a CD32 and want a computer with CD capability for just £300.

OVERALL
With acceleration this would eclipse the standard A1200.
86%

OctaMED SoundStudio

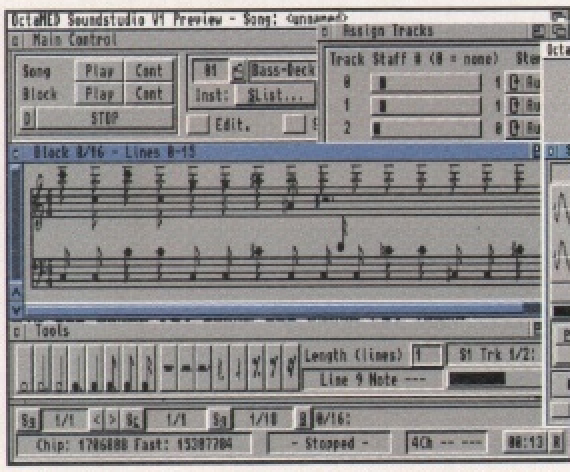
A new generation of trackers is about to arrive, bringing Amiga audio bang up to date, starting with SoundStudio.

SoundStudio 1.0 is set to be the first release of a next generation of OctaMED sequencers. Although it may look just the same at a glance, the menus have some powerful new features. How do you fancy 64 tracks of samples, each with its own stereo pan position, with optional delay and echo effects? That'll do nicely thanks.

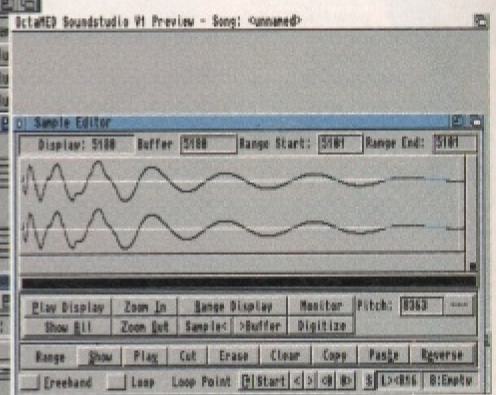
Retargetable audio bonus

The key to SoundStudio's stunning new features is its own kind of 'retargetable audio'. In the same way that retargetable graphics systems allow you to direct graphic output to any one of a number of display boards, SoundStudio supports six different audio output options. Normal four-channel trackers traditionally take advantage of the Amiga's built-in sample replay functions, using the Paula chip directly to replay samples from Chip RAM. While this is very efficient in terms of speed, barely taxing the CPU, it does have limitations, such as allowing no more than four samples to be played at once, with two samples sent to the left channel and the other two to the right.

SoundStudio gets around these limitations by inserting a new signal processing stage before the sound is output. In effect, the sample data is read from anywhere in memory, including Fast RAM and then it's processed according to the user's settings, during which the samples are mixed, given a stereo pan position, echoes are added if required and then the final stereo signal is output to the chosen destination. The destination can be the Amiga's standard audio output (both 8-bit and 14-bit output is supported), a Toccata 16-bit output, a 16-bit Maestix output, or even sent straight to a hard drive as a continuous stereo 8 or 16-bit sample.



▲ The notation editor makes a return in a new improved form after its absence from the last two major OctaMED revisions.

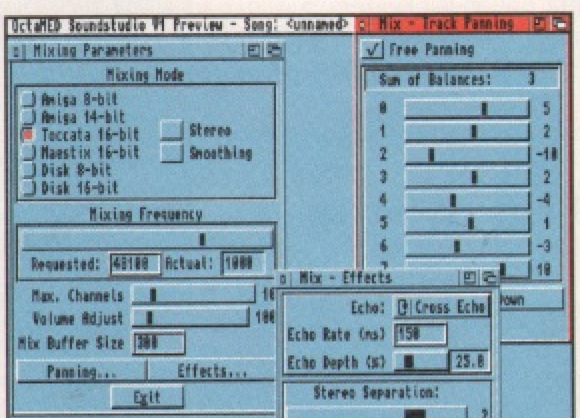


▲ Many different sample formats are included, with plenty of support for 16 bit and stereo sounds.

No limits

The advantages of handling the sample manipulation with software routines are manifold. For example, the Amiga cannot play samples in reverse as standard. This is no longer a limitation. Passing samples through effects routines is now possible, and although at the moment this is limited to delays and echoes, in future this may be expanded to include phase and chorus effects. We may even see synthesiser options such as resonant filtering (as already featured in Musicline Editor).

Output quality will depend on the speed of your Amiga. Faster processors can mix the tracks at a higher rate, thus including more of the original sample information and introduce less noise. The system comes into its own on a fast Amiga (50MHz 030 or better) with a 16-bit output device, such as a Toccata card. A stock A1200 will struggle to achieve good reproduction of the higher frequencies which start to sound scratchy as if low sample rates are being used. Good news: the notation editor is back! It vanished when OctaMED morphed from its custom GUI of version 4 to the windows and menus of version 5. A notation display isn't very well suited to a tracker editor (much of the tracker information is impossible to display using traditional stave notation) but some still find it reassuring to be able to view their melodies in this way. It also gives you the chance to output your modules as hard copy via a printer.



▲ These are the most impressive new controls – SoundStudio's unique retargetable audio features that break away from previous limitations.

So good, so far

We had hoped to bring you a full review in this issue but it's still in development, so we'll have to wait a little longer for a full analysis. It's looking good so far and if author Teijo Kinnunen can pull it off, it could be the best reason yet to keep your Amiga at the heart of your sequencing set-up for years to come.■

Tony Horgan

It's on the CD, it is

The CD edition of this month's CU Amiga Magazine includes a non-save demo of OctaMED SoundStudio. You can run it straight from the CD (you'll find it in the Sound drawer). A generous selection of multi-channel Screamtracker (3SM) modules have also been included, which can be loaded into SoundStudio. This is an early preview version, so everything won't be fully working at this stage. Have fun!

Aural Synthetica

■ Price: £35.50 ■ Developer: Blachford Technology ■ Supplier: Seasoft Computing ✆ 01903 850378

Turn your Amiga into a sprawling modular synthesiser with this new sample generation system.



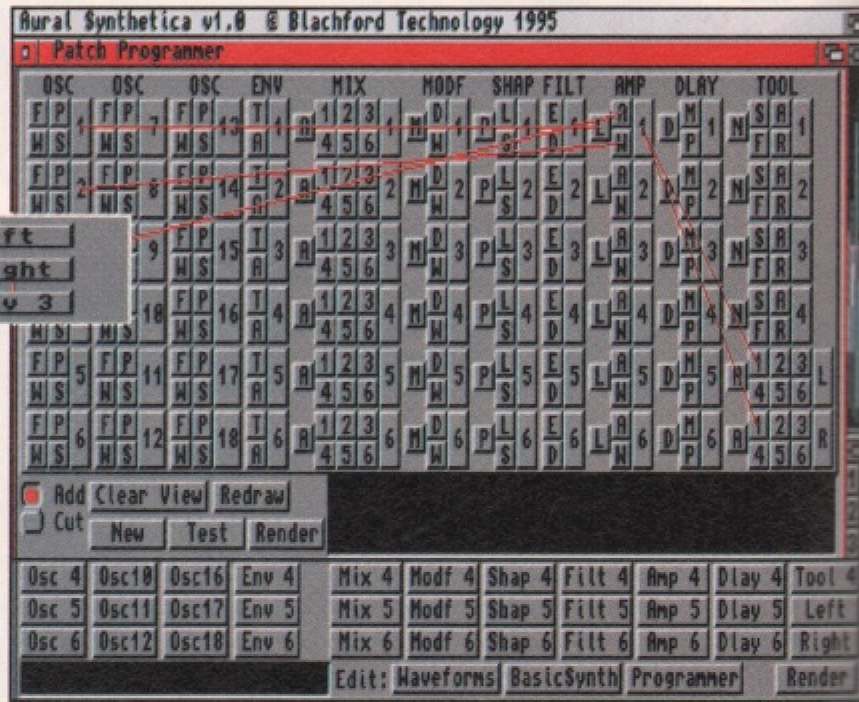
If you make modules with your Amiga, you're bound to have longed for a synthesiser at one time or another. Maybe you've even given in and bought one. The trouble with working solely with samples is that if you don't have the required sample, there's nothing much you can do about it; you'll just have to make do with what you've got. This is where Aural Synthetica comes into the picture. It's like a software version of a module synthesiser, but rather than working in realtime, it renders its sounds as samples, which you can then use in your chosen tracker or sequencer.

Twiddly bits

Sample synthesis programs have been around for quite a few years, but none has gone to the same lengths as Aural Synthetica. It gives you a massive range of buttons and sliders to push and pull however you see fit. Once you think you've got a recipe for an earthquaking sound, you hit the render button and wait for the sound wave to wend its way through the sequence of oscillators, modulators, filters and other 'components'. Once it's all finished you end up with a 16-bit 44kHz sound sample which you can play, or save out to disk as an SAFF, AIFF, WAV, MAUD or IFF sample.

There's an impressive amount of operators to tinker with. You can use up to 18 oscillators along with stacks of other twiddly bits. The patch programmer section offers almost limitless possibilities if you want to explore them. If the synthesis was carried out in real time it would be quite fun to experiment with all the different settings, but the time it takes the render the sounds can be off-putting. If you're not sure what you're doing you can spend all day generating useless sounds. Having to wait for your changes to be rendered before hearing them, can make learning the ropes a slow process.

On the other hand if you do know all about modular synthesis, you could generate some excellent sounds without too much bother.



▲ See, it's quite simple really! Aural Synthetica allows you to create your own 'patches' as if you were using one of those old analogue modular synthesisers.

The sounds

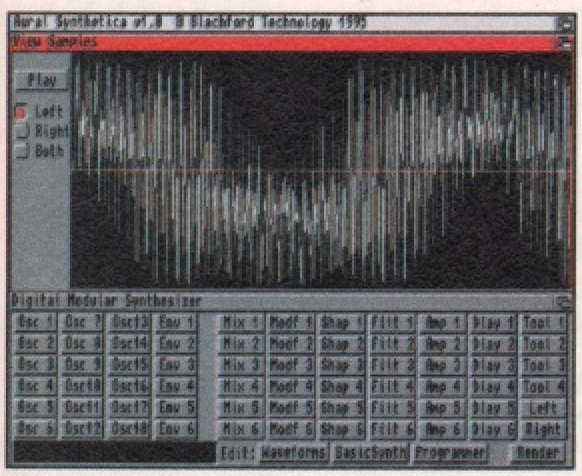
On the disk there are 51 patches for use as examples. These are a big help in understanding the workings of the program, as you can modify them and compare the originals with your versions. Most of these are weird sound effects, although there are a few that could be used as instruments. On the whole the examples are very impressive, especially if you like abrasive abstract techno sounds.

Conclusion

There are a number of improvements and bug fixes I'd like to see in the program. 'Error in patch' messages are common after loading and hitting render, when a reload proves there was clearly nothing wrong. If you try to save a sample to a disk that is full, the program gives no indication that it hasn't saved the file, or that the disk is full. A low grade quick-render option is also required, due to the long rendering times, even on fast Amigas.

Even with these faults and oversights, Aural Synthetica is a very interesting and potentially useful program. It can create some decent noises and if you know what you're doing there's plenty of scope for building your own completely original sample sets. Unless you're very patient you'll need a fast Amiga though. To give you some idea, with a 50mHz 030 you can expect to wait around 30 seconds to render a typical two second sample. Rendering times vary depending on the settings. Hours of fun for season synth fans. ■

Tony Horgan



▲ The top window is the rendered sample. The buttons below give access to the multitude of operators and options.

Understanding synths

Modular synthesis is a fascinating but baffling subject. Understanding the concepts of oscillators, frequency modulators and the like can be an uphill struggle and you really need a good analogue synth with plenty of knobs and sliders to get a feel for what each part does and how it affects the others. The Aural Synthetica manual takes you through the stages of making your first sound, while the AmigaGuide document goes into more depth on the subject.

AURAL SYNTHETICA

A500 · A500+ · A600 · A1200 · A1500 · A2000 · A3000 · A4000

system requirements: OS 2 or above, 2Mb RAM. Accelerator recommended.

ease of use 75%
All accessed through a GUI but confusing to synth novices.

performance 80%
Rendering is slow, but the results can be very impressive.

value for money 80%
At the attractively low end of the price scale.

OVERALL
Potentially potent sound creation tool. **78%**

Limelight Tyro

■ **Price: £65.80** ■ **Developer: Future Software Systems** ■ **Supplier: Future Software Systems ✆ 01628 24318**

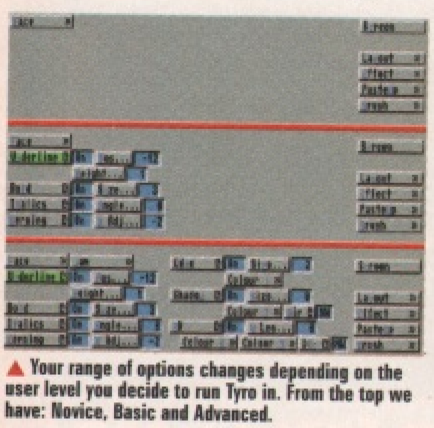
A new entry level video titler which claims to offer some powerful features but can it deliver the goods?

As established software packages get increasingly powerful, complex and more expensive, the market for a low-end introductory alternative starts to open up. While Limelight Tyro doesn't aim to compete with the likes of Scala, MediaPoint or VideoStage Pro, it does have a few tricks of its own to help win the approval of the less ambitious videographer.

Like most video titlers, Limelight Tyro uses a two-tier screen layout, one for the screen you are putting together and another laid over the bottom which houses the control panel. This allows you to have an interlaced display screen with a more comfortable non-interlaced control panel both visible at the same time.

There are three modes in which the program can be used, from novice to advanced. In novice mode, the menus only reveal a few of the total available selections, with more on offer in intermediate mode and the whole lot available in advanced mode. It's a kind of 'blinkering' system that is supposed to lead you gently into the program without confusing you with a mass of options from the start. You might expect this sort of approach with some kids' educational software, but I'm not sure of its worth in a 'grown up' product such as this.

There is also no direct way of jumping from one menu to any other. With around a dozen menus in Tyro this often means that you have to move through several menus to get to where you want.



▲ Your range of options changes depending on the user level you decide to run Tyro in. From the top we have: Novice, Basic and Advanced.

Features

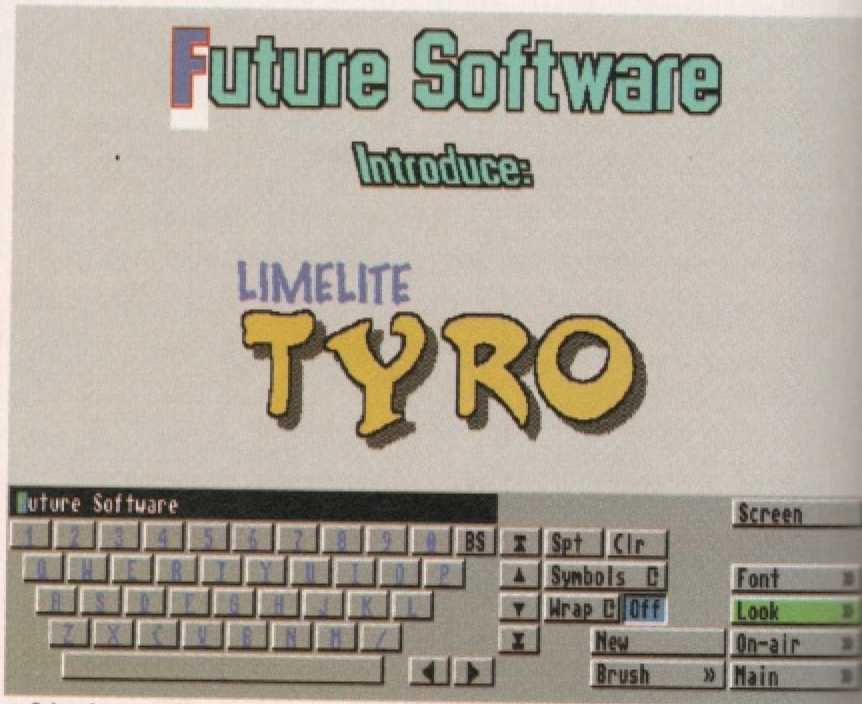
Limelight Tyro is a fairly basic video titler. The first step is to enter some text. This can be done via the keyboard or by using the mouse to click on a graphical representation of the keyboard that appears on the control panel. Although this seems pointless, it may be useful in very unusual such as when the program is running on a CD32 system with no keyboard, or if your keyboard was faulty. There's also a disconcerting time lag between you typing the text and the letters appearing on the screen. They do appear instantly in the text box on the control panel but on the main screen, it takes a little longer to draw the characters, giving the impression that you've misspelled your words.

Style changes can be made to the text once it's on the screen. The usual selections of colour, bold, underline, italic, spacing and kerning are available, with a 3D drop shadow option and a further shadow which uses a dithered pattern to produce a semi transparent shadow that is effective even when using a genlock. Bitmapped and Compugraphic fonts can both be used at any selected size.

Colour IFF backdrops can be loaded into your pages. Tyro automatically alters the screen mode to match the imported image. You're free to use overscan modes on any Amiga and AGA modes are also supported.

Transitions

When it comes to transitions, Tyro provides line and screen effects. While there is a good selection of wipes and fly-ons to choose from, there is nothing outstanding and there are occasional glitches with the more processor intensive ones. I couldn't achieve the videographer's favourite vertical scroll without each page stopping for a split-second although the horizontal crawl works well.



▲ Quite why you would prefer to enter text in using the mouse rather than typing it in on the keyboard I'm not sure. You can cycle through various keyboards for lower case letters and symbols.

If you are using a genlock to transfer your titles to video then there is one special feature. Connect an RGB monitor to your genlock and you can set in motion Tyro's On-line and Off-line feature. While in Off-line mode your video passes straight through the genlock without any graphics showing. This allows you to construct and preview your graphics on the RGB monitor without fear of them being recorded. When you are ready to introduce your titles into the video, just switch to On-line. And all this happens without the need for additional hardware or switching on your genlock. This feature would especially appeal to a studio using a live video feed with the need to create titles on the fly, but this isn't really the beginner's territory that Tyro is aimed at.

If you have a low end machine with no hard drive you will have missed out on last month's VideoStage Pro cover disk, in which case Limelight Tyro should fit the bill, but don't expect it to add too much pizzazz to your productions. ■

Norman Harris

LIMELIGHT TYRO

A500 · A500+ · A600 · A1200 · A1500 · A2000 · A3000 · A4000

system requirements: Any Amiga with Workbench 2.04 or later, 2Mb RAM. Workbench with AGA Chip Set and 4Mb RAM recommended.

ease of use......................70%
Not the easiest of programs to get on with. A more graphical manual might help.

performance......................70%
Adequate for the home video buff but don't expect it to add much glitz.

value for money.................68%
Not a bad price but not an absolute bargain either.

OVERALL
Adequate entry level titling program. **70%**

GET STARTED

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.kes etc. The Escom rivival and much more.

'miga Environment
.hat is your Amiga? Why is it so special? What is the
scene'? Who are Amiga Technologies and what do they do?

ne Amiga Hardware
.side, outside, ports, chips all explained

Vorkbench and DOS
Vhat is it? Using it. Data and file management, Workbench
ıvironment tips, the CLI, advanced WB and CLI tricks

'rogramming
.MOS, Blitz, assembly, C, Amiga E and AREXX examined

ecome an Artist Overnight
aytracing, 3D, animation, bitmap drawing analysed

.ecome an Amiga Music Maestro
Uctamed explained, MIDI discussed, musicians interviewed

Getting Your Words into Print
Word processing, Desk Top Publishing, Printers, Clipart etc

Surfing the Super Information Highway
Intro to the Internet, Surfing the Internet, WWW design, Amiga Internet Providers, Amiga Internet software. The Amiga Technologies Internet pack taken for a test drive.

General Arena
Emulation, Operating Systems, Storage Systems, Amiga in Business, Multimedia etc etc etc

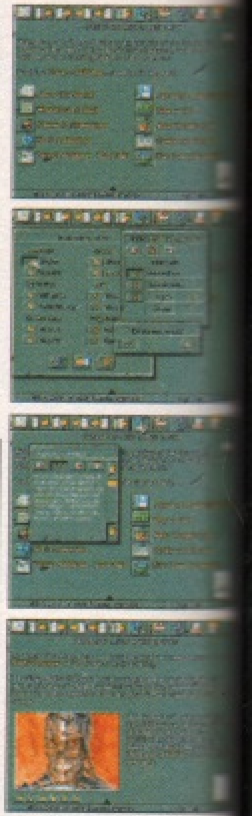
The Amiga Future
Where is the Amiga going? Amiga Technologies' plans, Amiga visions, possible industry comments. Amiga "Visions" - the companies that will bring us innovative products in 1996. We interview Intersect Developments, Fields of Vision and more.

And Finally
Credits, thanks and anything we have forgotten!

Also!

- Full version of DOpus v4
- Full version of Octamed v5.04
- Other full programs (TBC)
- 'Test Drive', exclusive version of Wordworth 3
- Limited Version of PPaint v6.4
- 'Get Connected' to the Internet - all you need, all ready to go!!
- Essential PD to Get Started!
- Exclusive stuff from various user groups and companies!

The world's first truly AGA multimedia, interactive compact disc. Designed for beginners, new users through to intermediate (and higher!) levels, it helps an Amiga user understand more about their computer and what it is capable of. Covers many subjects from raytracing to the Internet and from programming to music. Many 'well-known' experts and Amiga-buffs are contributing to this CD. They offer help, answers, tips, tricks and more. Want to know how the experts create a WWW page? Global Internet show how! Stuck using Internet software? John Kennedy explains all. Also contains forums, opinions and a look to the future with top Amiga developers. Comes with a FREE bonus beginners section with commercial programs, commercial demos and all the PD you need to Get Started, all ready-to-run. If you have an AGA Amiga with a CD player, then get this. PC multimedia CD's are here!



Above are four screen grabs ... an early version of the Get St... CD interface: The main page, ... colour windows, the floating ... tionary and an animation exa...

And Starring!

Kev and Gareth Craft	- Amiga MIDI	- MIDICraft
Steve Bye	- AMOS Programming	- F1 Licenceware
Ed Wiles	- Octamed in Depth	- Octamed Expert
Larry Hickmott	- DTP, Printers, Clipart	- LH Publishing
Peter and David Clarke	- 3D Animation	- The Room Upstairs
Simon & Co.	- 3D Architecture	- V.S.I.
Mark Thomas	- WWW Design/future	- Global Internet Ltd
Danny Amor	- The CD and German Mkt	- Freelance Writer
Jason Jordache	- Bitmap Graphics	- Freelance Artist
Dale Hemenway	- Animation	- Dalemation
David Taylor	- Storage, Emulation	- Freelance Writer
John Kennedy	- Internet etc etc etc!	- Paragon (Freelance)
Jeremy Ford	- PD Section	- Ground Zero Software
Justin Joyce	- Amiga DTV	- Axiom Video Services
Andrew Campbell	- AMOS 'Hands-on'	- AMOS Programmer
Richard Bannister	- Music (Soundstudio)	- MED Users Group
Spencer Jarvis	- Imagine 'Hands-on'	- Imagine Users Group

ADVANCED AMIGAGUIDE - AAG

- **Fast Rendering of 8 bit (256 colour) Images**
  practically instantaneous display of 256 colour pictures even on stock 020 Amiga. There can be more than one 256 image displayed at one time with the palette sharer.
- **Is a Stand-alone Platform Unlike Other "Hypertext" Products (HTML Language etc)**
  does not need other programs such as MUI or AmiTCP to run
- **Allows Text, Picture and Gadget Links as Opposed to it's Pre-desessor**
  click on a picture or animated gadget and move to another page. Retrace back to your original position.
- **Allows the use of Sub-Modules Runnable as Commands**
  for instance, play and show an animation as a command by clicking on a button! The commands can allow you to "link" to anything and anywhere. Click a link and enable the dictionary etc.
- **Multiple Fonts & Add Colour from 256 Colour Pallete**
  you can use as many different fonts as you like. Just use the normal Amiga bitmap fonts in any size! You can also add colour to the text from a pallete of 256 colours. Highlight a word - add colour. Highlight different links - add colour!
- **Super Bitmap Window**
  cater for AmigaGuide files which take up more lines than is available
- **Downward Compatibility**
  is able to read old AmigaGuide format (and soon HTML pages)
- **Drawing Tools**
  AAG allows you to create lines, boxes, circles and colour them by using simple commands such as @DRAW 10-40,25-60 or @LINE 10,30,35 - using co-ordinates and lengths.

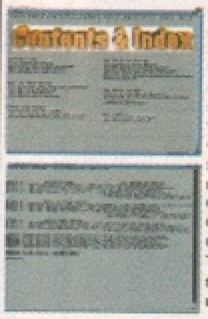
Advanced AmigaGuide (or AAG) is the language that resides behind the Get Started interface. It offers ma... enhanced and powerful features over the old AmigaGuide language. To the left of this box is a list of the fea... tures AAG contains. AAG could be used in a multimedia product, interface front-end, on-line help program... disk magazine and much more. Contact us for licence details. AAG should be available by May/June 1996.

The Get Started CD should be available from most good CD mail order and high street Amiga retailers. All rights reserved. Contents may be subject to change.

Out March 1996 [AGA Machines] German version due early April. **£29.99**

AAG - GUI OS VERSION

Advanced AmigaGuide (AAG) can be a direct replacement for the current AmigaGuide. In a native OS GUI version it looks very similar to the existing format, however it is very different. The language allows more flexibility such as the co-ordination of text, images and gadgets in upto 256 colours and can add more powerful features such as HTML decoding or use of multiple fonts on a page. AAG can also read old AmigaGuide files. It also uses the same techniques for writing ".GUIDE" files (see second picture): @NODE, @LINK, @COMMAND etc are the same as the old format, but new commands have been added such as @IMAGE, @REM, @MOD, @SECTION, @PAGE, @COLOUR, @BOX, @DRAW, @LINE, @GOTO, @CENTRE etc etc. This allows the user to quickly understand the simplicity of writing the documents/pages.



FREE 'ALL YOU NEED' SECTION

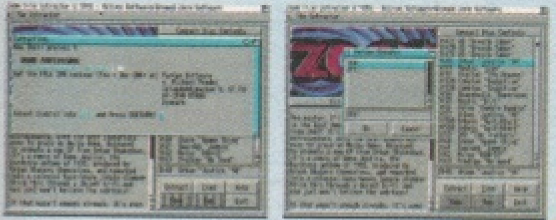
The 'all-you-need' section contains a carefully sele... ed collection of read-to-run material: This section encompasses full (or limited) commercial programs such as **Octamed v5.04, Personal Paint 6, Directory Opus 4** and **Wordworth 'Test-Drive'** with commercial demos and superb public domain as chosen by Ground Zero. There are exclusive collections from M.U.G., the Imagine Users Group, MIDICraft, AMOSzine authors and Cloanto. The PD conte... are highlighted and examined within the Get Started inte... face. There is also a superb "Get Connected" area: all y... need, ready-to-run/install (all explained in the Get Star... interface!!) to get onto the Internet. Global Internet will be pr... viding the access, so immediate 'net surfing! There are ma... more reasons to buy Get Started - it's like 3 CD's in 1... Multimedia CD, Internet Software CD, Commercial Softwa...

GLOBAL INTERNET

ZOOM



It's HERE! Zoom release 2 - now in ready-to-run and DMS format! Do you want the latest PD CD-Rom that contains the latest PD to January 1996? Contains the greatest and latest PD from two superb PD libraries. The interface must be the most easy to use CD interface on any CD. Coded by the co-author of the superb new Get Started CD - just point, read about the disk and click to extract. Superb and very easy to use. The contents have also been updated so you get all the latest PD until early January 1996 and loads more as listed opposite. Comes with an on-line help routine, multitasking search routine and hotkeys function. If you want 650MB's of the latest PD, then look here! Two formats - ready-to-run and the DMS format (for shops etc). The pictures below show the enhanced DMS interface in action.



Superb value CD-Rom at only £19.99 **NEW!**

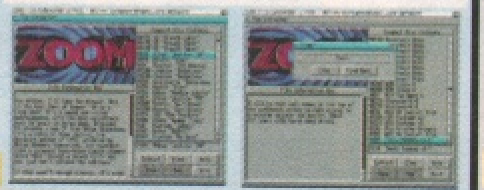
NEW - RELEASE VER-

- ✔ **New Search Routine**
  the multi-tasking search/find will seek file names or number
- ✔ **New 'Hot-Keys' Function**
  just press 'S' for search or 'E' for extract, 'Help" for help!
- ✔ **Restyled, Remastered**
  new help and information guide, restyled artwork! Superb!

- **Greatest & latest PD from early 1995 - January 1996 : Utils, games, demos, slideshows, education, disk mags and more!**
  - including most of this advert and loads of great PD software
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- **NEW! Special 'programming' themed area**

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volume one - FI-01 to FI-100

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Hi-Q PowerStation

■ Price: £299.95 ■ Developer: HiQ Ltd ■ Supplier: HiQ Ltd © 01525 211327 http://www.hiq.co.uk

Anyone wishing to expand their A600 or A1200 to have CD-ROM and SCSI capability should take a look at this effective device.

Two problems face the A600/1200 owner wanting to expand their machine: one concerns where to store the drives and the other concentrates on how much electrical power you'll need. These worries mainly effect external devices such as CD-ROMs and other SCSI devices. Hi-Q have partially come to the rescue with their PowerStation, which, although a simple device, can be highly useful for those intending to connect some real hardware to their A600/1200.

Squirrel driven

The PowerStation consists of a rather nice PC tower case, a SCSI extension cable and an internal SCSI ribbon which terminates in a connector for the extension cable. The theory is that you use Hi-Soft's Squirrel PCMCIA SCSI interface fitted to your A1200 (or A600 for that matter) and attach the extension cable to the Squirrel's SCSI connector. Most SCSI devices can be fitted into the tower case, attached to the internal ribbon and driven by the Squirrel.

The PowerStation has a healthy 200W power supply in the case. This not only runs any SCSI peripherals connected, it has an Amiga cable too, so there's no need to buy a Goliath to power your accelerator and internal HD. Hi-Q want part of the stock power supply (AKA The Brick) back in exchange though, since Amiga Power leads are in short supply. You simply smip the connector end of the lead and send it to them. The transformer itself can then be used as door stop; a task it's more suited to than attempting to power an expanded Amiga. Your monitor can also be plugged into the pass- through power socket on the rear of the tower so that with a simple push of the button, Amiga, drives and monitor are all powered on or off. Darned handy.



Audio freaks

The most common configuration available from Hi-Q is the Tower, as reviewed here, fitted with a Sony 2.4 speed (breaking the tradition of drives being even multiples of single speed units). This mechanism featured in a pack from Hi-Soft reviewed previously. It's proved to have excellent access time and a healthy rate of transfer as well as facility to be able to send audio data down the SCSI bus. Audio freaks will love this feature as the highest possible quality samples can be obtained with no extra hardware. A very respectable and cost-effective mechanism to have built in, HiQ chose well with this Sony mechanism. Also included with the CD-ROM are two sets of RCA/Phono jacks which allow the CD audio to be mixed into your Amiga audio through the loop.

Annoyingly, the tower has a panel which covers the drive bays. This would have to be left open to get regular access to the CD drive. If not concerned with appearance the user might prefer to remove it all together.

The tower, unfortunately, is a little too deep for my liking. It will use quite a lot of desk space but being equipped with 2 full 5.25" drive bays and two centred 2 3.5" drive bays, it does at least have the requisite storage. The innards of the tower generally have everything that's required. A healthy length of internal SCSI cable with 5 x 50 way SCSI connectors fitted will be more than enough for any drives internally. The connector at the rear of the tower also has a passthrough connector so that external devices could still be looped through such as the Zip drive which is still not available in an internal form.

It all depends

Whether the PowerStation is a worthy purchase depends on how many SCSI devices you want to connect. If all you want is a beefier power supply and a CD-ROM with SCSI capability then a Goliath and Hi-Soft CD bundle is £235, which is more than £50 cheaper than the PowerStation. However, if you wanted to add a SCSI hard drive, it would be difficult and messy to do without the Tower. You'd need an external box and power supply, which would probably cost about the same as the PowerStation but wouldn't have as many future expansion options. In this case I'd recommend the PowerStation.

The PowerStation is an effective highly expandable system that's well constructed if a bit large. Although Amiga owners just wanting one or two SCSI devices in the foreseeable future might be better served by an external box, the PowerStation is a good option for anyone needing to add several internal SCSI devices. Such a set-up with a SCSI HD, CD-ROM, Internal ZIP (when available) and perhaps coupled with the forthcoming Hi-Soft Surf Squirrel (extra SCSI speed and high speed serial) would be an admirable Amiga system indeed. Recommended. ■

Mat Bettinson

Hi-Q PowerStation

A500 · A500+ · A600 · A1200 · A1500 · A2000 · A3000 · A4000

system requirements:
A1200 or A600 only

ease of use 90%
Just plug in the extension cable. Anyone can fit an internal HD to a tower case.

performance 86%
Does what it needs to. Uses up a lot of desk space though.

value for money 82%
Most of the cost is made up from the CD-ROM mechanism.

OVERALL Recommended beefy expansion solution. **84%**

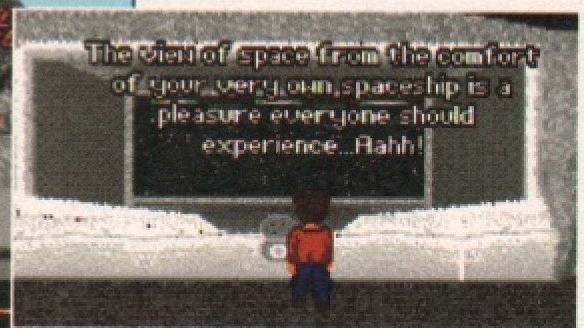
CD-ROM Round Up

We've gone CD-ROM crazy this month. There's a special bumper edition of choice shiny discs for you to look at.

F1 Licenceware Volume 1

Licenceware software is really cheap commercial mail order software. The 'ware' part of the name comes from the idea that it's like pre-registered shareware. The range of software covers games, education and utilities, along with a few music-related disks. The games are generally sub-standard AMOS creations but there are a few highlights, such as Relics of Deldroneye and Giddy. The utilities section is made up of disk magazine creators, a video titler, a game map editor, a database, a picture converter and Graphic Adventure Creator, which is the best of the bunch. Next there's the sound section which contains some modules and conversion tools, followed by the graphics department which is made up of kids art packages and graphics tools.





Finally there's the miscellaneous drawer which is filled with disk magazines and quiz programs.

While there are some goodies on the CD, much of the software will not satisfy the demands of 'power' users. The need to unpack to floppies on many occasions and then be presented with a non-DOS disk containing software that may have no quit option can be infuriating. This is an exceptional case and much of the software can be run straight from the CD, but system-friendliness seems not to have been a high priority in most cases.

Available from: F1 Licenceware, 31 Wellington Road, Exeter, Devon EX2 9DU. Tel: 01392 493 580. Price: £29.99 plus 50p P+P.

60%

Danny Amor's Online Library Vol 1

If you haven't already checked out the World Wide Web pages on this month's cover CD, do so immediately! Right, now you've done that, you'll be familiar with the idea of using a web browser to view documents on a local drive. It works well and it's a lot cheaper than doing it over a phone line!

Danny Amor's Online Library is using the same system to present his 200 plus books on this CD. The selection takes in a range of public domain publications, including of course The Bible, along with lots of reference material from various sources, such as the CIA, which supplies encyclopedic information on every country in the world with population figures, financial status and all that kind of stuff. There's also some classic fiction from Charles Dickens, Robert Louis Stevenson, Tolstoy, Mark Twain, Jules Verne, HG Wells and Antonella D' Addeo. Some of the volumes are text-only but there's also quite a bit of illustration to keep your mince pies stimulated. (bit of cockney thrown in for the Londoners, I like it – Ed).



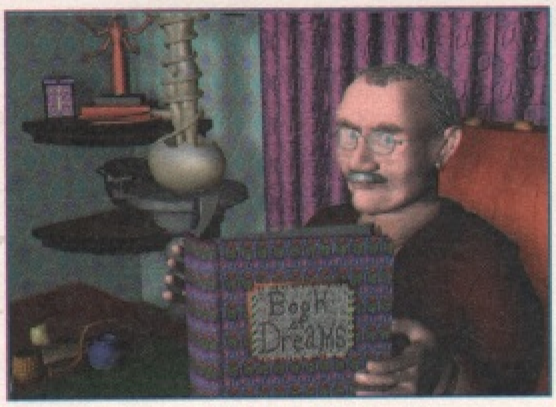
There's not enough room on the CD for it to be anything like a fully featured library but there is a wide enough variety of topics. It doesn't seem to be aimed at anyone in particular. Maybe a more focused selection would help aim the CD at a particular audience. Even so, it's quite an impressive presentation all the same.

Remember you'll need a web browser in order to use this CD.

Available from: GTI, Zimmersmühlenweg 73, 61440 Oberursel, Germany (see adverts for UK suppliers). Price: TBA.

80%

Nothing But GIFs

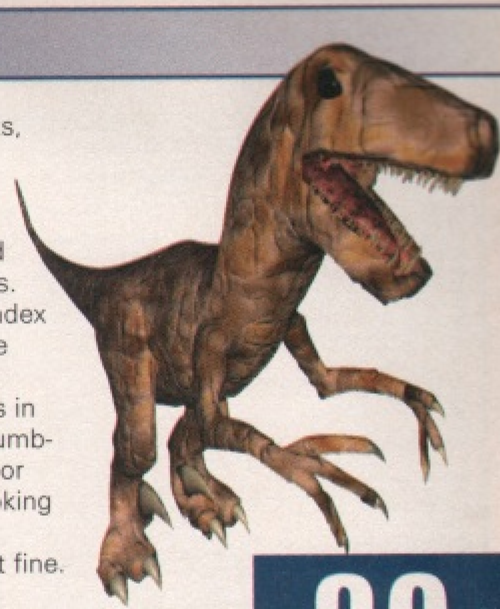


While some graphics collections are filled out with scraps from the bottom of the public domain barrel, Nothing But GIFs offers a wide range of high quality images. As you've already guessed, all the pictures are in 256 GIF format. The sizes vary but most are around 640x512 pixels, which is just right for high resolution interlaced screens. The pictures are separated into three main sections: drawn, digitised and rendered.

The first section is made up of pictures from demos and what look like DPaint doodles. The largest area of the disc is taken up by the digitised pictures, which are split into animals, buildings, glamour, landscape, miscellaneous, people, plants, space and transport sections. Finally there's the rendered area, which holds all of the 3D ray-traced and fractal-generated images.

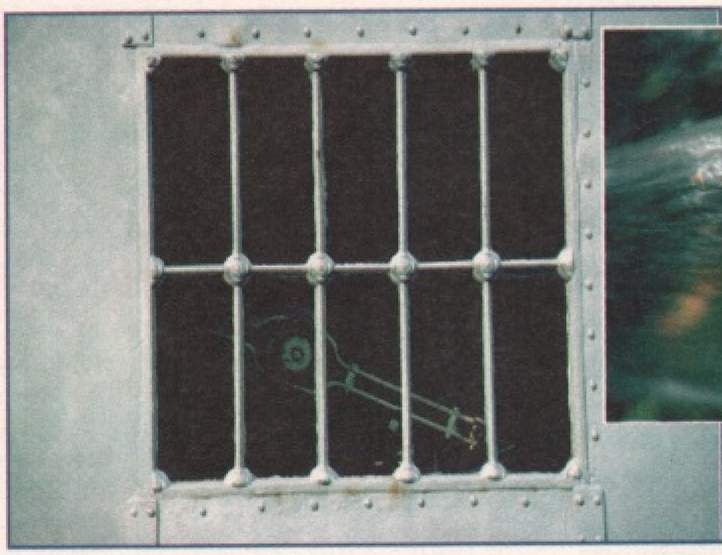
There's an AmigaGuide index included on the disc to make viewing as easy as possible. There are also index pictures in each drawer, made up of thumbnail versions of the images for quick reference. If you're looking for a good photo library CD, Nothing But GIFs will do just fine.

Available from: 17 Bit Software, 1st Floor Offices, 2/8 Market Street, West Yorkshire WF1 1DH. Price: **£19.99 plus 75p P+P.**



89%

Texture Portfolio





One of the best features of this CD is the printed index booklet that comes with it. It's a collection of 24-bit texture and backdrop images, each of which is pictured in the booklet along with its filename. It's high time that CD-ROM producers started producing proper documentation for their discs, as it makes using them so much easier.

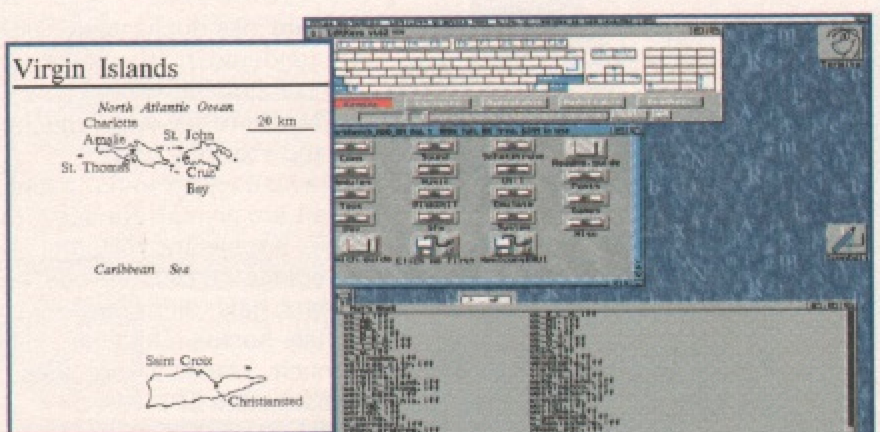
The images are duplicated in three formats (JPEG, TARGA and PICT) and most are digitised from photographs. Each one is segregated into one of the following areas: abstract, animal, clouds, fire, food, masonry, rock, metal, water, wood and miscellaneous. Although the duplication of the images means that there aren't as many files as there might be on rival CDs, they're all very clean and you won't find any fillers.

Whether you want textures for 3D rendering or backdrops for general graphics and video work, Texture Portfolio has plenty to offer.

Available from: Ground Zero Software, 4 Chandos Road, Redland, Bristol BS6 6PE. Tel: 01179 741 462. Price: £29.99 plus 75p P+P.

91%

Workbench Add-On



The theme here is productivity, or to be more precise, how to increase it. Workbench Add-On covers most of the areas you'll find on the Aminet and Fred Fish CDs (comms, mods, text, development tools, sound, games, fonts, utilities, disk tools, games etc) but in this case it's mostly ready to run rather than archived. Magic User Interface is included, and is required to make full use of the CD.

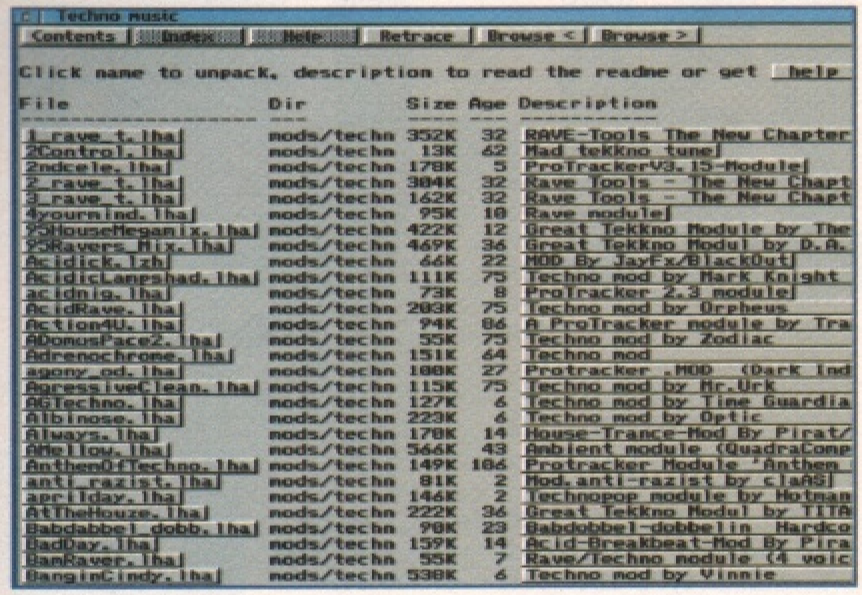
Sensible emphasis has been placed on registering the shareware software on the disc, to the extent that the accompanying booklet has a number of registration forms complete with addresses and prices, in both English and German. It's good to see such a responsible attitude, as without shareware registrations, there would be no shareware to put on the CD in the first place.

One of the best aspects of this CD is the generous amount of sound samples and music modules. The samples can be auditioned straight from the disc but unfortunately many of them replay at the wrong speed. Even so, the overall quality of this CD is exceptionally high and there are quite a few 'original' samples, rather than the same old ones that crop up on most CDs. Well worth a look.

Available from: GTI, Zimmersmühlenweg 73, 61440 Oberursel, Germany. Price: TBA.

84%

Aminet 10



Here it is, the latest grab bag from the Amiga's definitive on-line shareware archive. It's all here: demos, utilities, software, pictures and a special focus on music modules. The format is just as before, with most of the files stored as LHA archives. Fortunately these can all be accessed from an intelligent AmigaGuide document, which automatically plays modules, displays pictures and unpacks archives as necessary. Not everything works straight from the guide, but it's a good system in general. Highly recommended as always.

Available from: Exclusive PD, First Floor Offices, Coltsfoot Drive, Waterlooville, Hants PO7 8DJ.



Price: £12.99 plus 75p P+P.

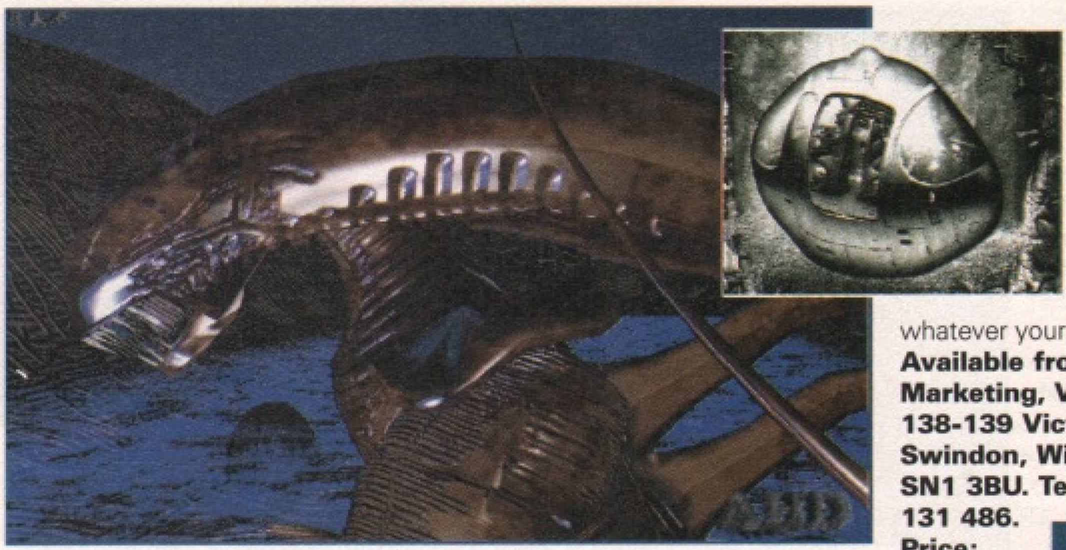
90%

The Epic Collection

Epic have their own unique approach to PD and shareware, often compiling their own themed packs of disks to complement the rest of their library. The Epic Collection is their PD library compressed into DMS files and put onto a CD-ROM.

The DMS files must be unpacked onto floppies before use. This is the only way to archive some demos, but it's a pain to have to go via floppies if all you want is to access some files or utilities. As there are very few demos or archives with alternative disk structures, it's shame you don't get the chance to unarchive to a specified drive.

However, the software included on the disc is varied, fun and often quite useful. The front end is attractive but uses a system of dual selection windows, making it easy to accidentally decompress the wrong disk. The lack of quit and screen cycle gadgets is also irritating but if you're not used to using Workbench then this may not be so much of a problem. All in all, a bit of a mixed bag but there are plenty of gems to be found, whatever your interests may be.



Available from: Epic Marketing, Victoria Centre, 138-139 Victoria Road, Swindon, Wiltshire SN1 3BU. Tel: 0500 131 486.

Price: £19.99 plus £1 P+P.

78%

Phase 2



The Phase series of clip art and font CDs has proven itself to be a most reliable source of graphics for video, DTP and general graphics work. Phase 2 uses the same format as the others, dividing its clip art into mono IFF, colour IFF and EPS, while its image bank has duplicates of all files rendered in 16 colours, 256 colours and HAM-6 mode. There are also Type 1, CG and ProDraw fonts.

Subjects covered in the mono clip art are animals, fantasy, music, people and religion. The colour IFF clips include birds, cars, cats, dinosaurs, dogs, fish, horses, The Lion King, music, planes and reptiles. Then there's the EPS section with animals, buildings, computers, food, logos, office, people, transport, USA and the world.

As for the images, we get animals, balloons, Blake's 7, cars, Conan, Dragon Lance, fantasy, horses, natural, planes, racing, renders, reptiles, snow scenes, space, Star Trek, trains and backdrops for video work. Added to that you also get some bonus bits, including all the PageStream 3 updates, the Opalvision 2.3b update and utilities, Typesmith 2.5a update and more.

Available from: EMC Computergraphic, 8 Edith Road, Clacton on Sea, Essex CO15 1JU. Tel: 01255 431 389.

Price: £24.99 plus £1 P+P.

89%

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V12-PD

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**OPEN SOON, V12-PD'S OWN BBS, ON THE SAME NUMBER AS OUR PHONE LINE, BUT RUNNING FROM 8PM-9AM, WE ARE CURRENTLY HAVING A LINE INSTALLED TO MAKE IT A 24 HOUR BBS, TRY LOGGING ON TODAY, WE MAY BE OPEN ALREADY AND YOU'LL BE MISSING OUT! IT'S CALLED GLAMOURPUSS BBS, AND TAKES ALL SPEEDS UPTO 28.8K, CONTACT US FOR THE BEST AMIGA ONLY FILES TO DATE, 4 GIGABYTES ONLINE, AS WELL AS CD'S AND SERVICES ON OFFER LIKE FAXES OUT.
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V12-PD WELCOMES ALL LOYAL AMIGA USERS OUT THERE!

WELCOME TO THE PD WORLD OF THE AMIGA, IT'S A SECRET INDUSTRY, FILLED WITH SPIES, MYSTERY, INTRIGUE, AND A MISS MARPLE IN EVERY VILLAGE! WE LIKE TO THINK WE'RE THE BIG CHEESES AROUND THE PD WORLD, NOT LEAST COS WE SMELL A BIT CHEDDARY.....

ONCE AGAIN, THE V12-PD LIBRARY GROWS INTO FURTHER GARGANTUAN PROPORTIONS, WITH NOW 13000 DISKS ON OFFER TO EVERYONE, AS WELL AS ANY CD YOU'D CARE TO MENTION. OUR NEW CD IS NOW AVAILABLE, CONTAINING 11000-12000 IN OUR CATDISKS, AS WELL AS MORE STUFF TO HAVE A SNUFFLE THROUGH THAN EVEN THE LARGEST SNUFFLERS COULD DEAL WITH IN A HURRY! EVERY TITLE HAS OUR TYPICALLY WITTY AND INTELLIGENT (?) DESCRIPTION ATTACHED TO IT ON THE MENU, AND FULL SEARCH/GOTO FACILITYS MAKE IT A DREAM TO USE. IT IS FULLY CONFIGURABLE TO BE ONLINE ON A BBS, SO BBS'S CAN GET 1 GIG OF NEW DATA IMMEDIATELY WITHOUT NEED FOR A NEW HARD DRIVE! YOU CAN IGNORE IT IF YOU WANT TO, BUT IF YOU DO IT'LL FEEL WORSE THAN A SHARP BITE ON THE BUM! JUST SO AS YOU KNOW.....

OK, WE'VE RAISED OUR PRICES, I HEAR YOU SAY, "OI, WHY'VE YOU DONE THAT, MISSUS, I AIN'T PAYING THAT!", WELL, THERE'S A GOOD REASON. WE RECENTLY DECIDED THAT AS PEOPLE NOWADAYS DON'T TREAT SOME PD AS 'THROW-AWAY TEMPORARY ENTERTAINMENT' WE WANTED TO MAKE SURE OUR PD WOULD LAST LONGER THAN A BAD SMELL IN A SMALL LIFT, SO WE HAVE MOVED OUR DISKS WE USE FOR TITLES UP TO FULL 70% CLIP GRADE A DISKS, WHICH OBVIOUSLY COST MORE FOR US TO BUY. NOW UNLESS YOU WANTED TO SEE US IN THE POORHOUSE, WE REALLY HAD TO PUT UP THE PRICES, AS THE SMALL INCREASE TO EACH CUSTOMER IS VERY IDDY-BIDDY, BUT IF WE FOOTED THE DIFFERENCE IT WOULD RUN INTO THOUSANDS A WEEK! I MUST STRESS THAT NOW V12'S PD AND BLANKS ARE FULL 100% GUARANTEED GADE A FINE STEAK, NOT THAT THE ONE'S WE WERE USING WERE POOR, BUT WE DECIDED AS WE CAN SEND YOU REALLY NICE ONES FOR A PITTANCE MORE, YOU'D PREFER IT.

PLEASE NOTE THAT FOR 20 DISKS OR MORE, THE PRICE IS NOT ALTERED, DUE TO BULK DISCOUNTS FOR US, AND WE'VE PASSED THAT BENEFIT STRAIGHT ON TO YOU. SO WE'RE STILL THE CHEAPEST LARGE SCALE FULL TIME LIBRARY AROUND. OH YES WE ARE. ALSO TAKE INTO CONSIDERATION THAT V12 IS ONE OF A VERY SMALL NUMBER OF LIBRARIES TO USE GRADE A DISKS, ALMOST ALL LIBRARIES STILL USE GRADE B'S, SO GET GOOD QUALITY GRADE A'S AT A CHEAPER PRICE THAN B'S AND REALLY BENEFIT!

OUR PD IS CHEAP, IT'S VERY CHEAP. IN FACT HERE ARE OUR PIDDLY PRICES:

1-5	DISKS = 70P EACH
6-9	DISKS = 65P EACH
10+	DISKS = 55P EACH
20+	DISKS = 50P EACH

50P

P+P IS ONLY 50P ON ANY SIZE ORDER! DISKS ARE 25P EACH INCLUDING P+P IF YOU SUPPLY THE BLANKS

THEREM THAT DIDN'T HURT TOO MUCH, DID IT? AND JUST COMPARE OUR NEW GRADE A PD DISKS TO ANYTHING ELSE YOU'VE EVER BEEN OFFERED IN A DARK ALLEY AT 2 IN THE MORNING, WE'RE STILL THE CHEAPEST, AND WE'RE STILL THE BEST! BUT I WON'T WITTER ON ABOUT ALL THAT, I'M HERE TO TELL YOU EXACTLY WHAT'S GOOD ABOUT V12-PD! V12 IS NOW A WELL ESTABLISHED PD LIBRARY, YOU CAN BE SURE THAT IF YOU PICK THIS MAGAZINE UP IN SIX MONTH'S TIME, WE'LL STILL BE HERE SELLING GOOD OL' BILLY JOE JIM BOB PD TO DELIGHT YOUR GOOD OL' GRANPA AND THE 96 COUSIN'S WHO ALL LIVE RATHER ODDLY IN A ONE ROOMED MAISONETTE.

OK, GOOD THINGS ABOUT US THEN. WELL, WE'RE CHEAP, THAT YOU KNOW ALREADY, BUT WE ALSO HAVE THE BEST CATDISK ON THE PLANET BY A VERY WIDE MARGIN. JUST TAKE A LOOK AT SOME OF THE THINGS OUR CATDISK CAN DO FROM THE PRESS OF A KEY OR THE CLICK OF AN ICON: 2 DISKS THAT SELF BOOT TO INDIVIDUAL CUSTOM MENUS WITH INDIVIDUAL EFFECTS, MUSIC AND LAYOUT, FULLY INSTALLABLE TO RAM DISK OR PARTIALLY INSTALLED FOR LOWER MEMORY SYSTEMS, FULLY INSTALLABLE TO HARD DISK ON ANY SYSTEM, SPEEDS OF OVER 300K A SEC WHEN I INSTALLED USING CRUNCHED ASCII FILES!, ANIMATION, HIRES INTERLACED INTRO SCREENS WITH SOUND EFFECTS ON EVERY MACHINE INCLUDING TYHE LOWEST POSSIBLE SPECS EVEN WHEN HD INSTALLED, FULLY MULTITASKING WHEN INSTALLED, SEARCH FACILITY, GOTO FACILITY, MUSIC (YOU CAN TURN IT OFF, DON'T WORRY!), AUTOMATIC WORKBENCH VERSION DETECTION INCLUDING THREE DIFFERENT VERSIONS OF THE CATDISK OPTIMIZED FOR ALL THREE MAIN SYSTEMS (1.3, 2.0, 3.0) ALL PACKED AND READY TO RUN ON ONE FLOPPY! ALL IN ALL, THE CATDISK IS SUPERB, AND HAS TAKEN 16 MONTHS OF DEVELOPMENT TO REACH THIS STAGE, SO YOU SHOULD GET A COPY TODAY, WITHOUT HESITATION. IT'S ALSO ONE OF THE VERY FEW CATDISKS AROUND TODAY THAT THE LISTINGS ARE IN ALPHABETICAL ORDER FOR REAL EASE OF USE.

SO, WE HAVE AN ALL SINGING, ALL DANCING CATDISK TO SHOW OFF, AND RIGHTLY SO, BUT WHAT ABOUT THE LISTINGS OF TITLES IN OUR LIBRARY ON IT? IT HAS FULL DETAILS OF THE CONTENTS OF EVERY COLLECTION WE STOCK, YES, EVERY UTILITY ON EVERY FRED FISH DISK IS ON THERE (A MUCHO BIG TASK, SENOR!), EVERY GAME ON THE ASSASSIN'S DISKS IS LISTED, YOU DON'T MISS OUT ON ANYTHING! THE DESCRIPITONS ARE TAKEN AFTER TESTING THE DISKS ON 4 DIFFERENT SET UPS, AND IT INCLUDES FULL COMPATIBILITY LISTINGS FOR EVERY ONE OF OUR 13000 TITLES. SO WHAT WE'RE TRYING TO SAY IS, WE'RE DEDICATED TO THE AMIGA, WE WORK VERY HARD TO PRODUCE SUCH A STAGGERING FEAT OF INFORMATION, AND WE WANT YOU TO SEE IT, SO IT'S ALSO EXTREMELY CHEAP. HOW CHEAP? NOT TELLING! NAAH, ONLY KIDDING, IF YOU WANT OUR LATEST DOUBLE DISK CATALOGUE, SEND JUST 3 FIRST CLASS STAMPS TO THE ADDRESS ABOVE, AND ALL WILL BE REVEALED WHEN THE LITTLE WHITE JIFFY FROM THE HALLOWED HALLS OF V12 COMES SAILING THROUGH YOUR DOOR!

AS THIS ADVERT WENT TO PRESS WE WERE FINDING OUT PRICES ON HARDWARE FOR SALE, IF YOU WANT ANYTHING, AND WANT IT CHEAP AND BRAND NEW WITH A FULL GUARANTEE, THEN GIVE US A RING FIRST, COS YOU MAY BE PAING WAY TOO MUCH ELSEWHERE. WE CAN GIVE FREE ADVICE WITH ANY SALE, AND ANY PD SOFTWARE THAT WILL ENHANCE YOUR BUY AS WELL, SO GIVE US A CALL ON 01507 450114 FOR A SUPERB DEAL ON ANYTHING FROM MOUSE MAT'S TO CD-RECORDERS.

NEW PACKS WE'VE PUT TOGETHER FOR YOU ARE THE FOLLOWING:

AMIGA: FROM BEGINNER TO WINNER (10) = 5.00 INCL P+P! TEN DISKS OF TUTORIALS AND UTILITIES ON EVERYTHING, FROM WORKBENCH, TO PRINTING, ARTWORK, ANIMATING, MUSIC, INTERNET AND COMMS, RAYTRACING, YOU NAME IT, IT'S HERE.

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AMIGA'S PINK PILL PACK (10) = 5.00 INCL P+P! 10 DISKS OF SYSTEM CHECKERS AND ENHANCERS, VIRUS KILLERS, LATEST VERSION OF DISK SALV AND VIRUS CHECKER, VIRUS WORKSHOP, MEMORY CHECKERS AND CLEARANCE, DEFRAGMENTATERS FOR HD'S, HD INSTALL SET UP, EVERYTHING YOU NEED TO KEEP THE AMIGA HEALTHY! SPECIFY WHICH AMIGA.

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VIDEO MANIACS PACK 1 (12) = 6.00 INCL P+P! A SUPERB PACK FOR VIDEO TITLING, DISK PRESENTATION OR INTROS, INCLUDES 3 DISKS OF UTILS FOR ANIMATING, TITLING, CONVERTING, ETC, AND 9 DISKS OF VIDEO TYPE FONTS, LARGE, BOLD, COLOURFUL, APPROX 500 IN ALL!

COMPUGRAPHIC FONT PACK 1 (15) = 7.00 INCL P+P! APPROX 170 COMPUGRAPHIC RESCALABLE FONTS ON 15 DISKS, SUITABLE FOR WORDWORTH ETC, SUPERB QUALITY AND A GOOD PRICE, MISSUS!

GLAMOUR GIRLS 1 (12) = 6.00 INCL P+P [AGA] 12 DISKS OF AGA GIRLS, INCLUDING SOME FAMOUS NAMES, OVER 18'S ONLY! SUPERB QUALITY PICS!

ALSO AVAILABLE, BULK PD IN 500 PACKS FOR 120.00 AND 1000 PACKS FOR 200.00! WE WILL SELL IT CHEAPER THAN MR DIM ON THE DIMMEST DAY OF HIS DIM LIFE!

TO GET YOUR PACKS, SIMPLY WRITE THE NAMES DOWN ON A PIECE OF PAPER, AND SEND A CHEQUE FOR ANY YOU REQUIRE, THE CATDISK IS FREE WITH A PACK TO SAVE YOU EVEN MORE! CHEQUES AND POSTAL ORDERS ACCEPTED, AS WELL AS PHONE BANKING. FOR AN ORDER OVER THE PHONE, PLEASE HAVE YOUR CHEQUE BOOK READY FOR THE ACCOUNT NUMBER, VISA NOT REQUIRED, BUT A CHEQUE BOOK IS!

GREETS GO OUT TO DEAN KELLY OF MIDNIGHT EXPRESS BBS, ROB DAVAU, STEFAN MANSIER OF HOLLAND, COCA COLA, FREAK OF NFA, MICHAEL CARTER, ROBERT WILKINS, NEIL PAINTER, AND A SPECIAL HI TOPHIL AT SADDLETRAMPS PD. IF THERE'S ANYONE ELSE THAT WANTS A GREETING, LET ME KNOW WHY YOU DESERVE ONE AND WE'LL PRINT THE BEST HERE EACH MONTH, NO, I AIN'T JOKING, GET YOUR NAME IN AN AMIGA MAG FOR THE FIRST TIME EVER!

FLATBED SCANNING SERVICES

FLATBED SCANNING IS NOW AVAILABLE TO A PROFESSIONAL STANDARD, WITH DPI UPTO 2400 X 2400 DPI, EVERY FILE FORMAT FROM ILBM TO JPEG, AND EVERY RESOLUTION FROM LORES-NTSC TO SUPERHIRES-FULL OVERSCAN PAL AND CUSTOM RESOLUTIONS BEYOND THAT. WE OFFER THIS SERVICE OUT TO ANY PD COMPANY, OR ANY AMIGA BASED COMPANY AT DISCOUNT TRADE PRICES, AND ALSO TO ANY AMIGA OWNING INDIVIDUAL AT THE VERY LOW PRICES, RING US FOR DETAILS, WE ARE AT LEAST 3 TIMES CHEAPER THAN DEDICATED SCANNING BUREAUS. ANY AMIGA COMPANY WHO WISHES TO OFFER OUR SERVICE CAN ARRANGE AN AGREEMENT WITH US FOR SOME SERIOUS DISCOUNTS, SO MAKE THOS SCANNING DREAMS COME TRUE! REMEMBER ALSO, OUR DIGITIZING SERVICE, WHEN ALLIED WITH SCANNING, CAN OFFER COMPUTER REPRESENTATION OF ANY OBJECT, ANY PICTURE UP TO ABOUT 4 SQUARE METRES(!) WITH NO LOSS OF QUALITY. PLEASE RING FOR FURTHER DETAILS.

We stock all the collections including Assassin's 1-250, Fred Fish 1-1000, Scope 1-220, Amigan, Arug, New Zealand, Imagine Object collection, Clipart collection, Barbie, Amos, Legal Tools 1-149 and thousands more. we now also sell CD's cheaper than everyone else, every Amiga CD available is, erm, available from us!

13000+ titles, that's more than a library with less than that!

PD Scene

A plethora of divine cheapness, in quality form, awaits you. Dave Cassidy takes a look at the holy world of new Public Domain software.

On the CD

Check out the CD edition of this month's issue of CU Amiga Magazine for the best of this month's Public Domain, including the amazing Dataworld.

Dataworld
AGA demo

Demo of the Month

A storming 80Mbs of animation makes up this rather tasty demo. It was an entry in The Party 95 demo competition held in Denmark at the end of last year, where it won second prize in the Wild Demo section.

It's a series of expanded 3D animations with a techno soundtrack. Featuring abstract morphs, stomach-churning camera rolls and loads of lens flare it's quite a treat. As it's so big you won't find it listed in PD library catalogues and you're unlikely to want to spend all day downloading it from the net or a BBS. Here's the good news: it's on this month's cover CD! If you have the CD edition of this magazine you'll find it ready-to-run in the public domain section.

Once you've watched it through a few times you can try using the anim player (YP) from the shell to play the anims. Read the documents on the CD for details.

Available from: Our cover CD. Not available on floppy disk.

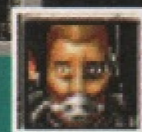




90%

Hilt 2
game





Strategy games are rarely my favourites, but Hilt 2 really enveloped me. It's simple enough to get to grips with, you control up to six characters who must venture through various worlds in order to destroy the enemy. To do this you must solve puzzles and cunningly use your forces to outwit your computer opponent. Each move consists of any combination of possible actions, such as walking, using computers, firing weapons and so on.

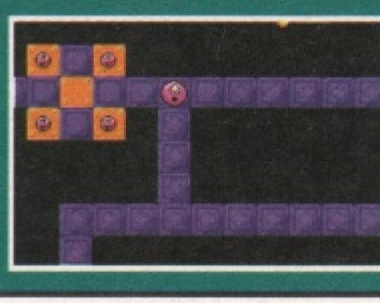
The range of possibilities within the game seems to be endless, and there's plenty of depth, especially with the prospect of extra mission disks becoming available. This is an extremely well executed game – as the polished graphics and sound testify – and fully deserves your attention.

Available from: 5th Dimension Licenseware, 1 Lower Mill Close, Goldthorpe, Rotherham, South Yorkshire S63 9BY. Tel/Fax: 01709 88812 7. Price: £3.95 including P+P.

91%

Blobble
game

Simple gameplay is the key here. All you have to do is guide a spherical chap around tiled areas, collecting tokens, points and letter bonuses. Tiles with cracks in them make life complicated, as do tiles which allow movement in only one direction. The graphics and sound are of a fair standard and the controls are sensitive enough to keep you busy.



Available from: Freestyle PD, 108 Woodside Way, Short Heath, Willenhall, West Midlands WV12 5NH. Tel: 01922 710985. Price: £1 plus 50p P+P.

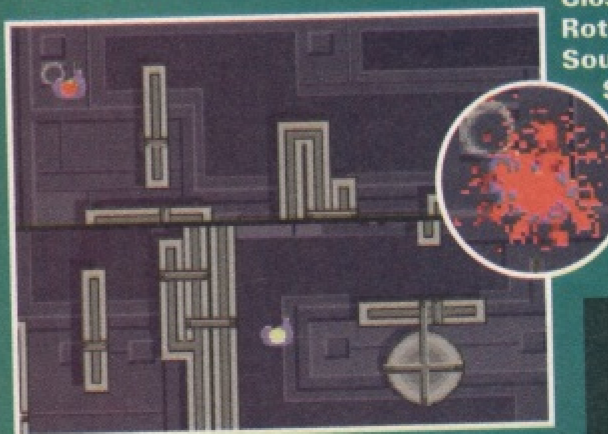
84%

Contentious
game

This is one of those split screen two-player games where you have to find and kill the other player. The playing areas are fairly large, but because the maze is so big, finding your opponent becomes as much a game of luck as tactics. You need some breadcrumbs to hand so you can leave a trail. Failing that it's pure luck.

Contentious is two player only, which limits its appeal, but with a cool theme tune (that for the life of me I can't name) and a built-in level construction kit, there's loads of longevity for those with fellow death-wishers they'd care to share the fun with.

Available from: 5th Dimension Licenseware, 1 Lower Mill Close, Goldthorpe, Rotherham, South Yorkshire S63 9BY. Tel/Fax: 01709 88812 7. Price: £2.95 including P+P.



75 %

Bomb Mania
game



This is an interesting twist on Dynablaster, in which you have to kill all the nasties on the level and collect the goodies by laying bombs over the playing area whilst avoiding blowing yourself up! One or two players can participate in the various worlds, with custom worlds also promised shortly.

Bomb Mania is well worth a look if you're into simple concept games that offer innovative twists on tried and tested concepts.

Available from: Freestyle PD, 108 Woodside Way, Short Heath, Willenhall, West Midlands WV12 5NH. Tel: 01922 710985. Price: £1 plus 50p P+P.

85 %

Galerie
AGA demo



The atmospheric music contributes a lot to Stellar's entry to The Party '95, with light-sourced terrain spins, including light flares taking the first honours. Concentric rings spin in multiple planes and then we're taken into warping tunnels and spinning vectors. It's fairly short, but well constructed overall, although very noticeable glitches can be seen occasionally.



Available from: Freestyle PD, 108 Woodside Way, Short Heath, Willenhall, West Midlands WV12 5NH. Tel: 01922 710985. Price: £1 plus 50p P+P. Requires hard drive and 2Mb Fast RAM.

80 %

Voyage In A Storm
AGA demo

With four disks you'd expect something fairly brilliant and that's just about what you get in this production from Impulse. It kicks off with a zooming, rotating texture-mapped polygon which is smooth even on a fairly basic 030 system. The music grabs your attention and syncs in perfectly with a superbly smooth run down an alleyway with curved walls – not so easy to achieve. Complex realtime Gouraud effects follow, with some simply gorgeous still graphics and another amazing module featuring a melodic vocal track. A landscape flyover finishes the whole deal, so you can sit back and watch the usual scroller, catching your breath.

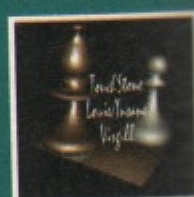
The Party 1995, held at Christmas, seems to have produced a fair selection of demos, and this is certainly one of the better ones. If you've got the hardware, check it out.

Available from: Freestyle PD, 108 Woodside Way, Short Heath, Willenhall, West Midlands WV12 5NH. Tel: 01922 710985. Price: £4 plus 50p P+P. Requires hard drive and 2Mb Fast RAM.



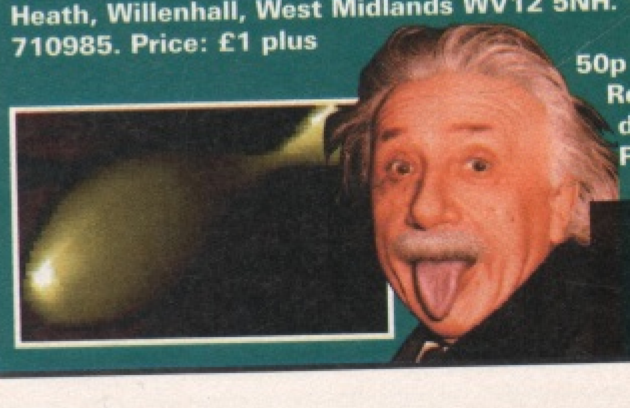
93 %

Crazy Sexy Cool
AGA demo



Einstein's tongue kicks off this Essence production and the superb quality of the graphics shown here is maintained throughout. A laid back acid jazz/trip hop concoction keeps the action shuffling along at a steady pace, as effects such as texture-mapped polygons, Gouraud-shaded torts with phong twists and light-sourced animated polygons sweep across the screen. It doesn't smack you between the eyes but takes you on a relaxing journey through some of the better code currently doing the rounds.

Available from: Freestyle PD, 108 Woodside Way, Short Heath, Willenhall, West Midlands WV12 5NH. Tel: 01922 710985. Price: £1 plus 50p P+P. Requires hard drive and 2Mb Fast RAM.



81 %

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PU 772 **HD GAMES INSTALLER 3** Inc: Steel Sky Flash-back, Sensi Soccer, Skidmarks 2, and more.
PU 898 **HD GAMES INSTALLER 4** Arcade Pool Assassin, Dizzy, KO3 (AGA) Zool (AGA) and more
PU 917 **LEMMINGS to HD, SETTLERS EDITOR**
PU 064 **HARD DRIVE UTILITIES** Backup,fix, etc
PU 548 **REORG V3.11** Disk organiser/optimizer
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PU 576 **HD CLICK v2.7** Menu system for HD
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PU 668 **SECURITY v3.71** Protect your HD
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PU 536 **M/W EXTRAS** PU 704 **M/W EXPANSION**
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PU 835/56 **MAGIC WORKBENCH EXTRAS Vols 1-12** Lots of fab Icons, etc for Magic Workbench! (24 disks!)
PU 859 **MAGIC SELECTOR** Random set-up MWB
PU 890 **MR BACKUP PROFESSIONAL V2.1**
PU 828 **MAGIC USER INTERFACE v2.3 (MUI)**
PU 871 **ASSIGN MANAGERS**help with those assigns
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GENERAL UTILITIES

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PU 828 **MAGIC USER INTERFACE v2.3 (MUI)**
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PU 874 **BLITZBLANKER V2.5** Very nice screenblanker
PU 897 **MAGNIFICAD** CAD package
PU 924 **MORSE CODE TUTOR v1.2** Learn morse code
PU 927 **EFF INTERNET GUIDE** Beginners guide to the net

BUSINESS

PB 019 **BUSINESS LETTERS** Examples of tricky letters.
PB 020 **TEXT ENGINE 4.1** Possibly the best 'PD' Wordpro.
PB 023 **FORMS UNLIMITED** Nice program to create Forms
PB 030 **THE MONEY PROGRAM** Attrctive budget prog
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PB 046 **PERSONAL DIARY** Simple electronic diary
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PB 075 **INVOICER V2.1** Creates invoice from datadase
PB 078 **TEXTPLUS v5** Archived for the Hard drive
PB 079 **PHONE LOCATOR** Find the area of any phone
PB 088 **EASYCALC v2b** Good spreadsheet. Latest version

EDUCATION

PE 007/8 **LEARN & PLAY**(2)Word/number games for ages 5-10
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GAMES

PG 124 **TOTAL WAR** A good game of RISK on the Amiga
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PG 314/5 **MR MEN OLYMPICS**(2) Frantic joystick waggler
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PG 467/8 **CYBERTECH AGA** Very impressive like Alien Breed
PG 486 **DYNAMITE WARRIORS 2** Very good Dynablasters
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PG 648 **EXELLENT CARD GAMES III (AGA)** Great
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PG 689 **MORTAL KUMQUAT 3**(n1.3) Great Beat em up
PG 690 **MANGLED FENDERS** Stock car racing
PG 691 **MASTERBLASTER 2** Best DynaBlasters?
PG 700 **DELUXE GALAGAv2.6** (n1.3)Super classic shoot up

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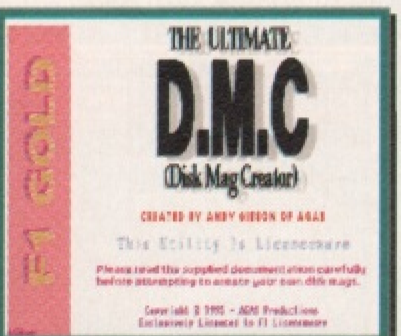
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PD Utilities

public domain

Tony Horgan rummages through his Public Domain mail bag and pulls out a selection of weird and wonderful utilities for you to take your pick from. Footy, cookery, music, it's all here.

DMC
disk mag creator



Nothing to do with the Disco Mixing Club, this DMC stands for Disk Magazine Creator and is designed to help you build your own floppy publications. I was expecting DMC to consist of a main editor/construction program from which you would collate and combine the various pages but it's not really that kind of a system. All of your pages must be written in a text editor and coded by hand to indicate font colours and so. Similarly, the article lists for the index pages must be coded from within your text editor with directions to further text and IFF graphics files. For example, the colour palette is defined by a list of six three figure hex values that must be entered into one of the configuration text files, eg. 5A2, 0FB, 19E, CCA, B15, 234. Simple eh? Yeah, right!

You can also use your own graphics for the control panel. When you've arranged all of your files on the disk and named them correctly, DMC will load them automatically when it is launched. Files compressed with CrunchMania are automatically decompressed.

There's no place for confusing formatting codes in an authoring package. They are fine as an optional extra but this should be handled by an editor program with a graphical front end, complete with buttons and menus for defining links, text styles and so on. Across between Scala and a DTP package is what's required. However, DMC will find its takers, and some will no doubt put it to use and produce fully-fledged publications, but don't expect too much.



Available from: F1 Licenceware, 31 Wellington Road, Exeter, Devon EX2 9DU. Tel: 01392 493 580. Price: £6.99 plus 50p P+P.

55%

World of Football Icons
AGA icon pack

Utility of the Month

Football crazy, football mad? If so, you'll probably jump at the chance to plaster your Workbench with this set of footy-themed icons.

Every team from the English League is included, from the Third Division up to the Premiership. There are pictures of the teams' shirts, complete with the sponsorship logos. You also get foreign club teams and the world's national teams. There's an extra section called Football By Another Name, which has similar icons for rugby and American football teams. The series, includes icons based on Star Trek, sci-fi, sports, glamour and other subjects.



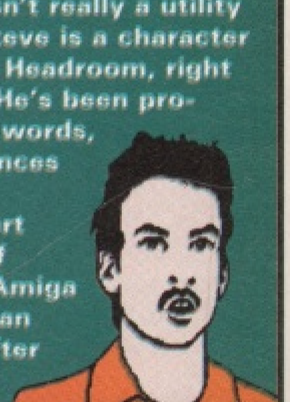
Available from: TMC, 22 Warrender Crescent, Dunbar, East Lothian EH42 1LU. Price: £1 including P+P.

81%

Steve Headroom
talking head

Here's a strange one. Steve Headroom isn't really a utility but it's quite interesting all the same. Steve is a character who bears a strong resemblance to Max Headroom, right down to the weird scrolling backdrops. He's been programmed with a vocabulary of digitised words, from which he constructs random sentences that still make some kind of sense.

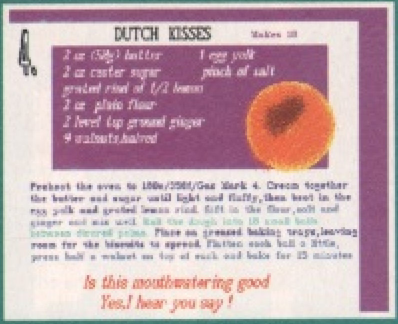
What's the point? There isn't one, apart from to keep you entertained at times of boredom, or perhaps to comfort lonely Amiga users. I like it anyway, even if the deadpan intonation of the voice starts to grate after the first 30 seconds.



Available from: 17 Bit Software, 1st Floor Offices, 2/8 Market Street, Wakefield, West Yorkshire WF1 1DH. Tel: 01924 366982. Requires 2Mb Chip RAM. Price: £2.00 plus 50 P+P.

80%

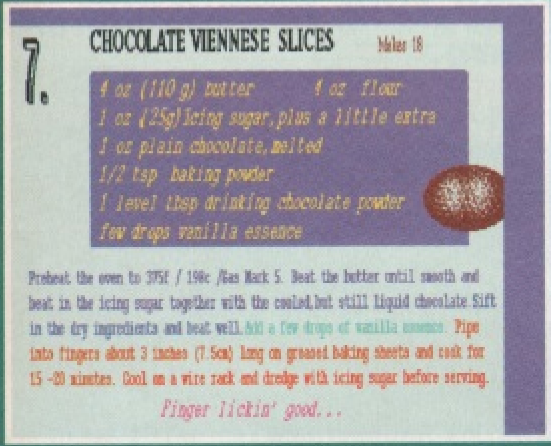
Granny's Cookbook 1
recipe book



If you happen to have your Amiga set up in the kitchen, a recipe book might come in handy, you never know.

Granny's Cookbook Volume 1 has suggestions for ten varieties of home-made biscuits, presented as a slideshow of IFF screens. Highlights include chocolate chip cookies, Dutch kisses and coconut cookies. Give it a shot if you're bored of those old fashioned paper cookbooks.

Available from: Classic Amiga PD, 11 Deansgate, Radcliffe, Manchester M26 9YJ. Tel: 0161 723 1638. Price: £2.00 including P+P.





78 %

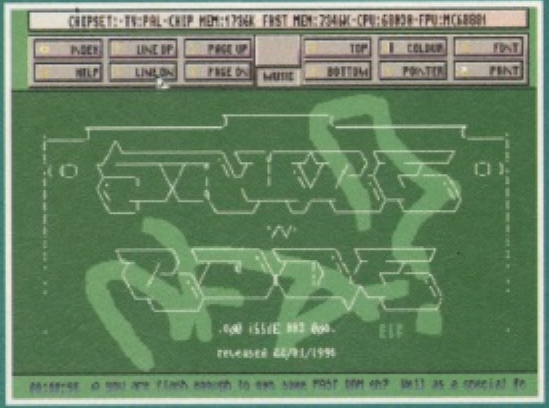
Sauce and Code 3
AMOS tutorials



Presented in the format of a disk magazine, Sauce and Code is a collection of AMOS programming tutorials and examples. All of the examples are geared towards writing demos and games, many of which come with source code to be loaded into AMOS, text explanations and in a few cases, executable files that can be run straight from the front end. The subjects covered in this issue include text scrollers, text effects, screen zooms and warps, and a sprinkling of other assorted visual tricks.

If you're into AMOS and have aspirations that exceed the limits of the manual, Sauce and Code is well worth a look.

Available from: Roberta Smith DTP, 190 Falloden Way, Hampstead Garden Suburb, London NW11 6JE. Tel: 0181 455 1626. Price: 90p plus 50 P+P.

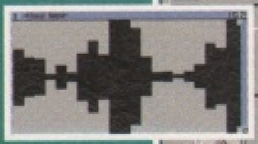




80 %

The Hit Kit 2
sound tools





Maybe this should be renamed The Hit and Miss Kit (boom boom!). It's a collection of sound utilities, as follows. PlayMod is a ProTracker module player that's useful due to its low memory overheads. Interplay 4 is a CD player with a few handy buttons and functions. VSound is a crude oscilloscope that can run in a Workbench window or on its own screen. PWSInfo is a system information diagnostic tool.

JustPlay is another small module player. SNED allows you to edit the instrument names of a module. MIDIPlay refused to work from the disk, but I presume it plays MIDI files when it works. MusicDots is a little AMOS program which creates 'music' (random ping sounds) as little dots bounce around the screen. Multisample is a handy if limited sample conversion tool. Mod2Smp converts modules to samples (in theory, but it didn't work with any I tried, not helped by the lack of docs). APercKey is a potentially useful sample triggering device that desperately needs a graphic interface (at the moment it requires the user to enter a long winded config file in order to get any sound at all).

So there you have it. If anything tickles your fancy you now know where to get it.

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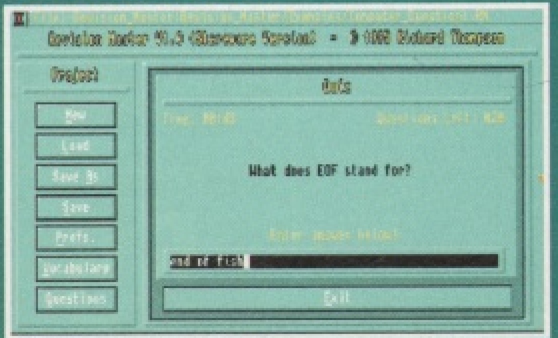
Revision Master
education



Unless you're some kind of speccy swot, when it comes to revising for exams, you need all the help you can get. Revision Master is a question and answer quiz designed to probe your cranium and test your knowledge of a specialised subject. Rather than attempt to cover everything from political history to home economics with a massive database of questions, it suggests that you (or a friend) build up your own bank of questions to suit your subject. I would imagine preparing the questions yourself would have limited value but if you could find someone to do it for you it could be quite useful.

As a bizarre form of bonus disk filler you also get a small animation of a galloping horse, scanned from photos taken by Eadweard Muybridge during the 19th century (try using it as an anim brush).

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76 %

THE ART GALLERY

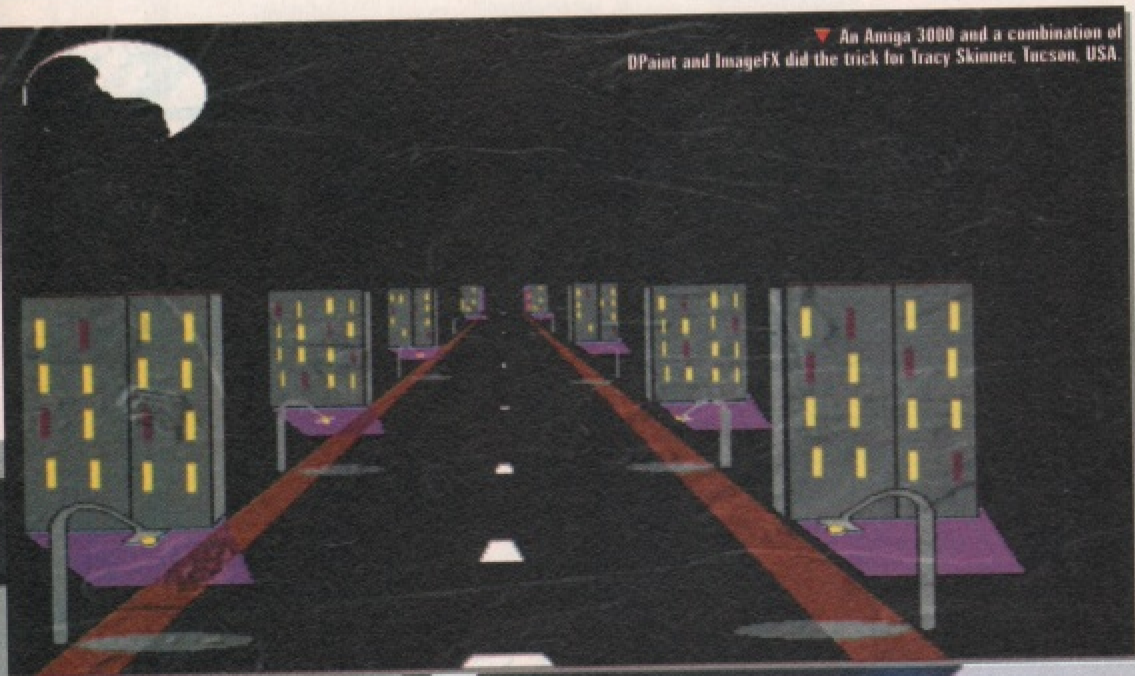
Wanted: art gallery entries. Please send to usual address.







▲ Jaco Gerber from South Africa used ImageFX and Brilliance to create some of these pictures.



▼ An Amiga 3000 and a combination of DPaint and ImageFX did the trick for Tracy Skinner, Tucson, USA.



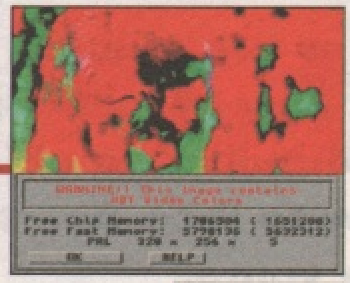
▲ Using an AT ad for inspiration Eric van Velthooven from the Netherlands, created this image with TVPaint Junior, LightWave and Photogenics.



▲ This 24-bit render, which started off as an entry for the Team 17 AB3D competition, was sent in by NathGVN, Birmingham, Email cm66700@ccub.wiv.ac.uk. Quality stuff!

AMIGA workshop





VideoStage Pro p96



Net God p102



Points of View p120

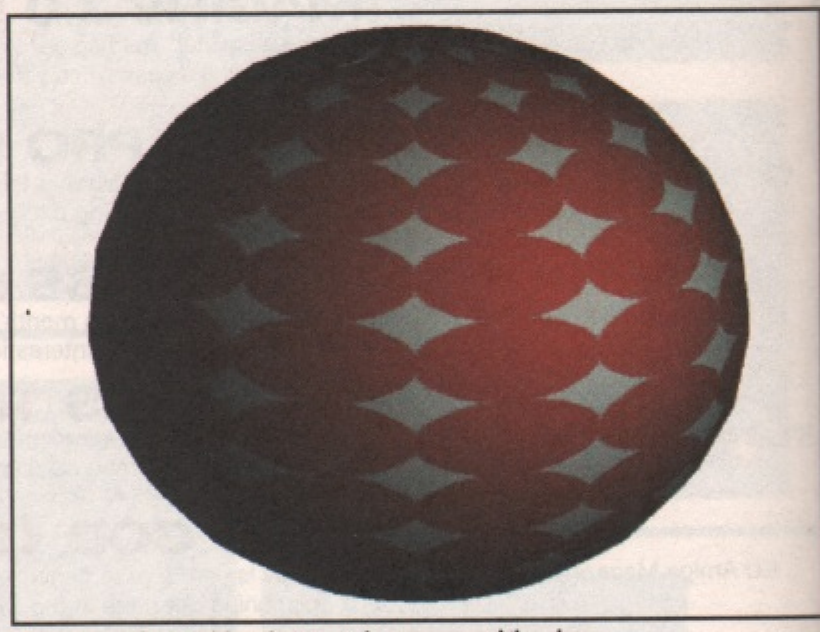
Regulars

Last month's four-man points of view generated a lot of interest so, this issue, by popular demand, it's three men and one woman's point view. There's also the usual helping of superb tutorials including Imagine and last month's VideoStage Pro cover disk. And check out our superb new worldwide cut price subscription offers and the all new six month option. Unbeatable value for all!

Imagine 3.0

PART 2

Brush maps are a quick and very easy way of including intricate detail in an object. Learn how to incorporate them into yours.

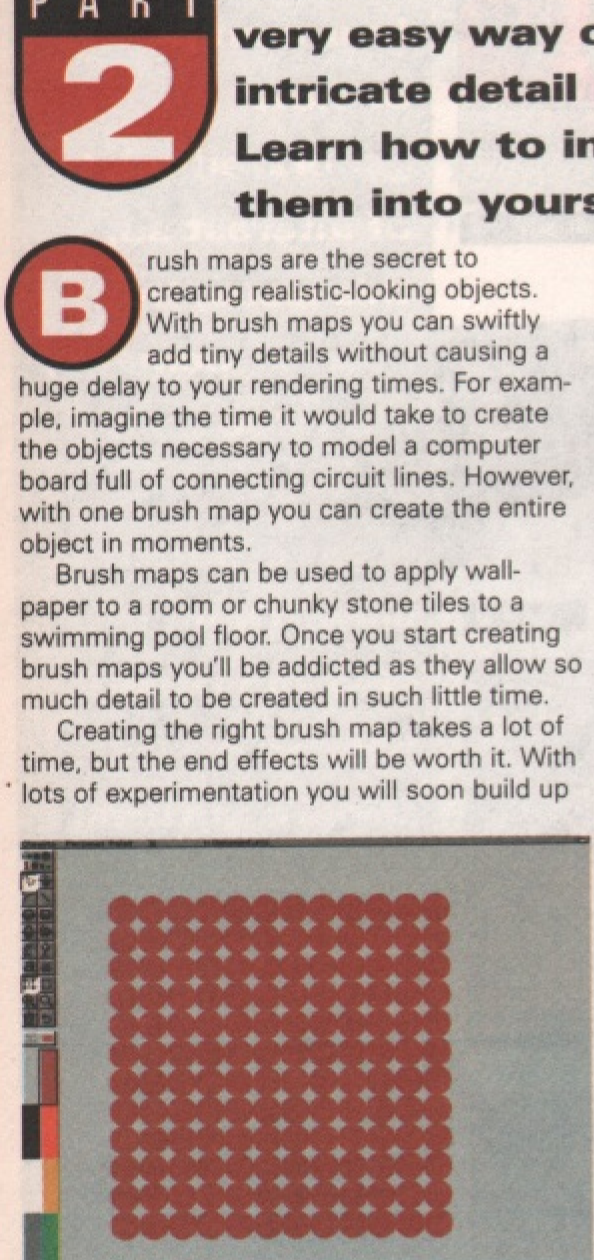


▲ Figure 4: perform a quick render to wrap the pattern around the sphere.

Brush maps are the secret to creating realistic-looking objects. With brush maps you can swiftly add tiny details without causing a huge delay to your rendering times. For example, imagine the time it would take to create the objects necessary to model a computer board full of connecting circuit lines. However, with one brush map you can create the entire object in moments.

Brush maps can be used to apply wallpaper to a room or chunky stone tiles to a swimming pool floor. Once you start creating brush maps you'll be addicted as they allow so much detail to be created in such little time.

Creating the right brush map takes a lot of time, but the end effects will be worth it. With lots of experimentation you will soon build up your own library of special maps for every occasion. Let's begin ...



▲ Figure 1: cut out a simple object as a brush.

Here's how

Using a paint program (here, Personal Paint) draw a simple pattern. Then cut it out as a brush and save it. Think of this image as a sheet of wrapping paper: we are now going to create an object and wrap it up. Thankfully Imagine can wrap objects a lot better than I can wrap presents. **See figure 1.**

Open a new project and go to the Detail Editor. Create a Primitive Sphere. Select the Sphere (click in the centre or press F1) and increase the scale. Whilst it is still selected, pick ATTRIBUTES from the pull-down menu. Click on ADD BRUSH. **See figure 2.**
Load in the brush that you created with the paint program. Copy the settings (apart from the name) and in particular check that the Wrap X and Wrap Z boxes are marked. **See figure 3.**

Perform a Quickrender of the object. Notice how the pattern is wrapped tightly around the sphere, not quite like wrapping paper (which would be bunched up at the top and bottom) but spaced out properly. This is what the Wrap X and Wrap Z options achieved. **See figure 4.**

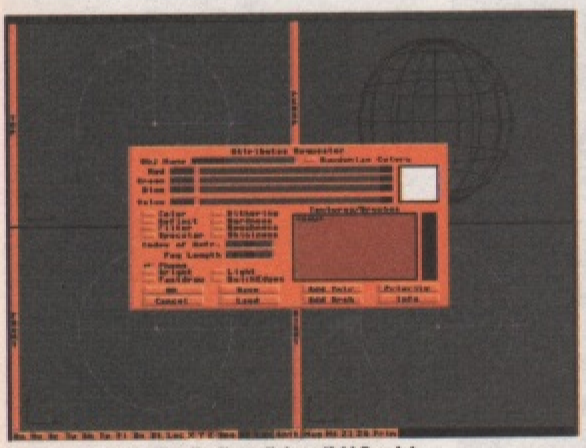
It is essential to appreciate the three main ways of mapping a brushmap onto a shape. Imagine will normally do most of the work in wrapping but you need to give it a hint about the general shape of the object. You can of course ignore these settings for special effects but stick with them for the moment.

The three main shapes are a Cuboid, a Cylinder and a Sphere. You can see from the diagram which mappings need to be altered depending on the shape.

For example, if you wanted to create a planet you would draw the surface (or scan it in from a book) and wrap it around a sphere with Wrap X and Wrap Z switched on. **See figure 5.**

A bit tricky

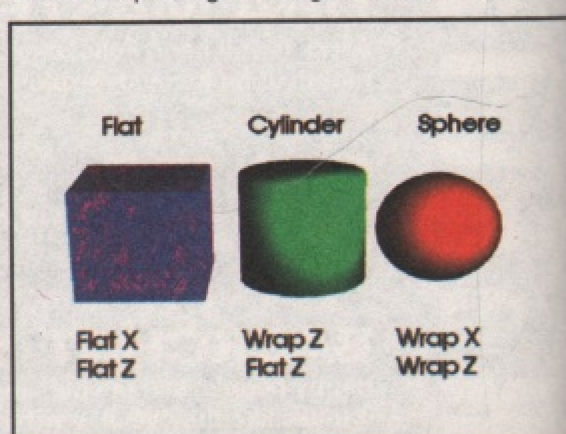
Let's move on to something slightly trickier. Let's say, for example, you wish to place a mapping onto an object in a particular place: not entirely covering it. A good example would be placing an insignia on an aircraft



▲ Figure 2: in the detail editor click on 'Add Brush.'



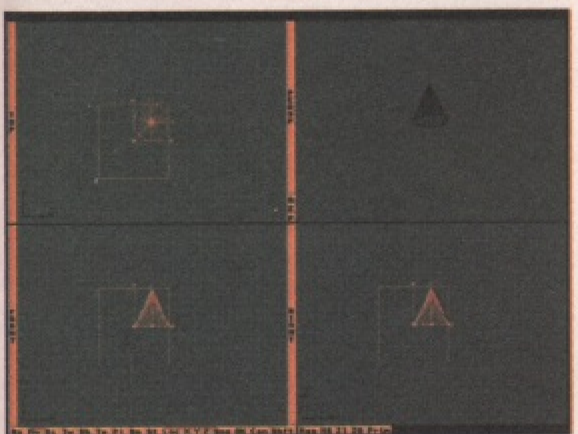
▲ Figure 3: loading in the brush that we created in our paint program.



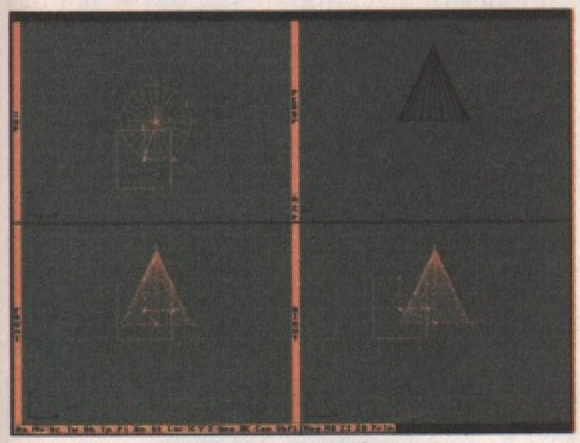
▲ Figure 5: there are three main shapes – cuboid, cylinder and sphere.



▲ Figure 6: here's our 'friendly' decal.



▲ Figure 7: in 'Edit Axis' the top right square is the map image.



▲ Figure 8: you can also rotate brush maps if you want.

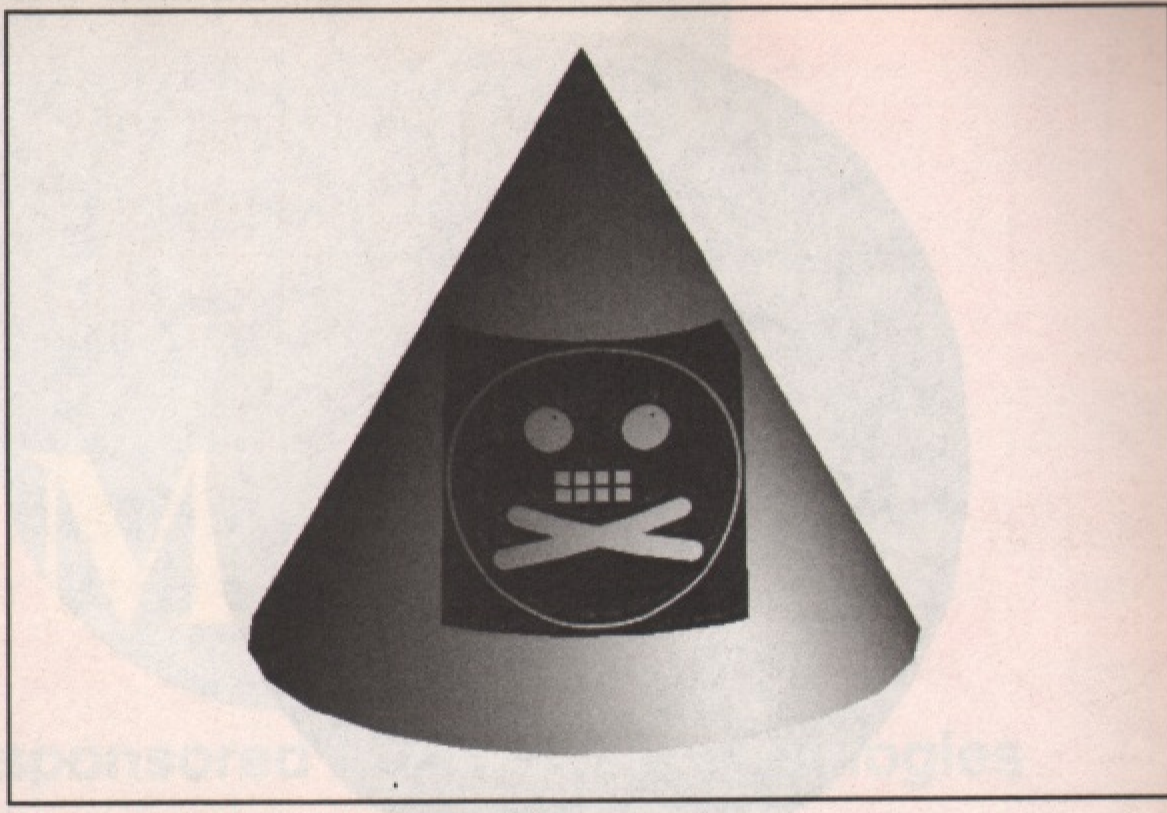
wing. This time the Wrapping format isn't quite as important as the position and shape of the image.

Creating this effect is possible because Imagine treats the brushmaps in much the same way as objects: you can move, stretch and manipulate the map in many ways.

Paint a small image and imagine this to be the 'decal' which we will place on our model. Make it small but detailed so you can tell which way it should be. **See figure 6.**

Now return to Imagine's Detail editor and create a cone or any other primitive shape. This is our model to which will apply the decal. Get a saucer of warm water ready to make the decal slide off the paper backdrop and try not to cover the fuselage with polystyrene cement as this makes it go all cloudy (oops... only joking, remember those days all you air fix fanatics out there?). Open the attributes requester and add a Brush as before.

This time we'll be keeping it flat, so don't touch the Wrap buttons. Instead click on the 'Edit Axis' button. You'll see the window disappear and instead there will be a grid overlaid on the cone. **See figure 7.**



▲ Figure 9: our decal and object combined to make an unusual sight.

The top right quarter of the grid represents the map image. Use Scale and Move to alter the size and shape until it looks something like the image shown here. You can always click cancel if you get lost, and then start again. Alternatively you can click on the 'Transform Axis' button and enter the new size and position by hand. Don't forget that you can rotate brush maps too if you wish. **See figure 8.**

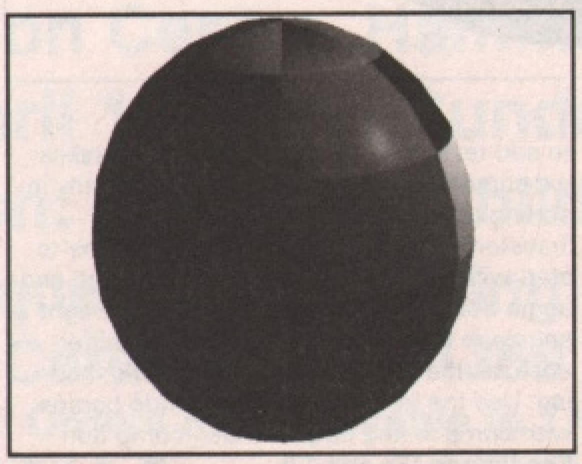
When you render it, you'll see that the decal has been changed to cover only a small part of the object. **See figure 9.**

Mapping techniques

So far the maps we have been dealing with have concentrated on controlling an object's colour. However, as you will have seen from the brush map attribute menu there are several other ways in which maps can be applied.

1. Colour Map

As we have seen, the colour map simply paints the object with the colour in the map. In this case, I have created a very fetching repeating square motif using different shades of gray (and some graduated tones too). OK, it's dull but you will see what a difference it makes when we apply the other mapping techniques. **See figure 10.**



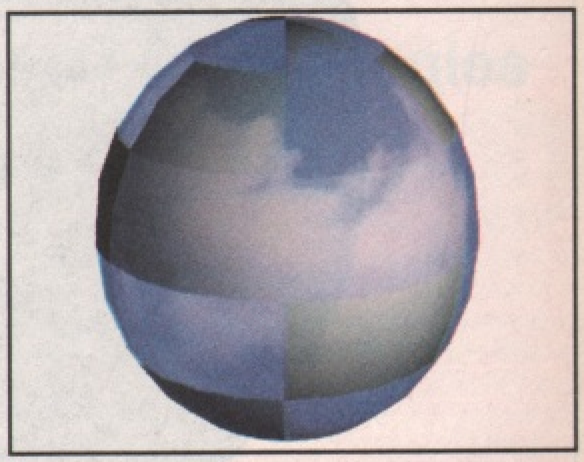
▲ Figure 10: here's the colour map in fetching shades of grey.

2. Reflectivity Map

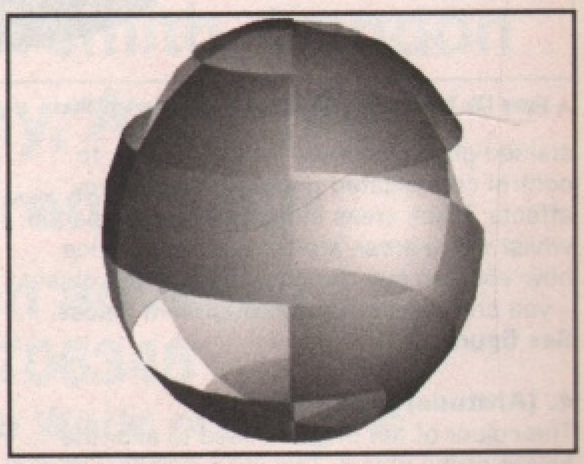
The colours in the brush cause the object to selectively reflect its surroundings. In order to see anything happen you will need to include a Global Reflection image – do this from the Global settings in the Action editor. The white parts of the map cause the reflection to be strongest, the black parts don't reflect anything at all. **See figure 11.**

3. Filter Map

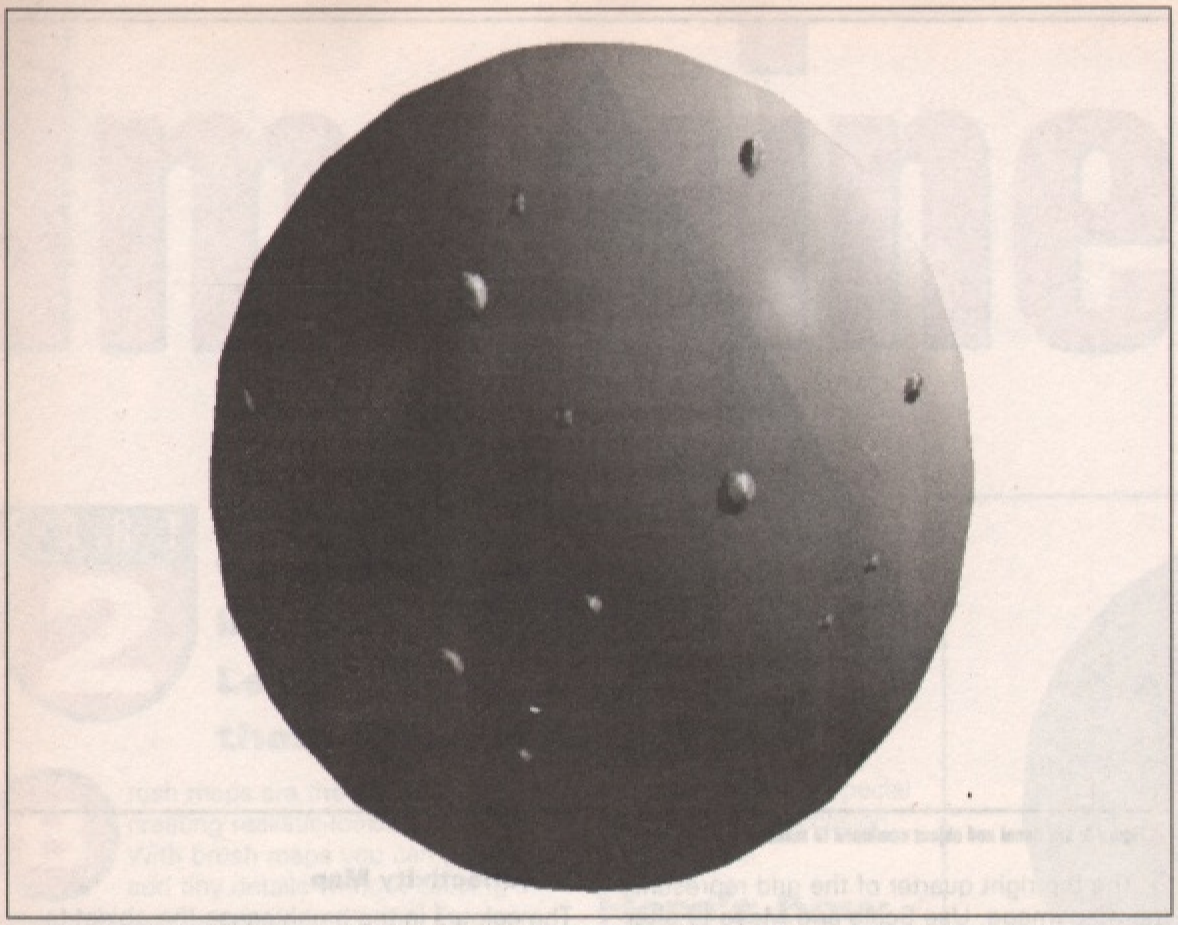
The colours in the brush make the object transparent. This can be applied to make



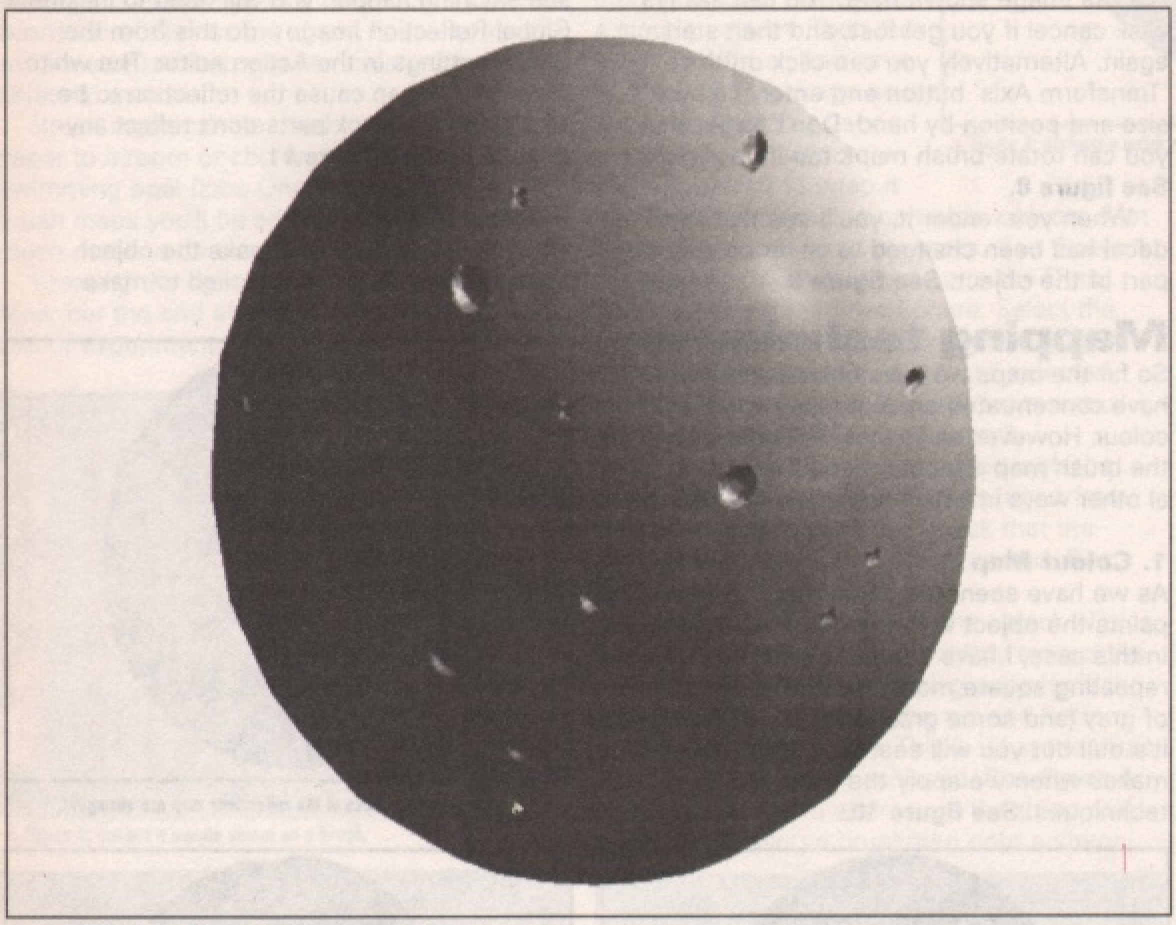
▲ Figure 11: the white parts of the reflectivity map are strongest.



▲ Figure 12: the filter map is ideal for a stained glass window effect.



▲ Figure 13a: you put your left bump in, right bump out .... The altitude map is where you can add texture, such as bumps, to an object.



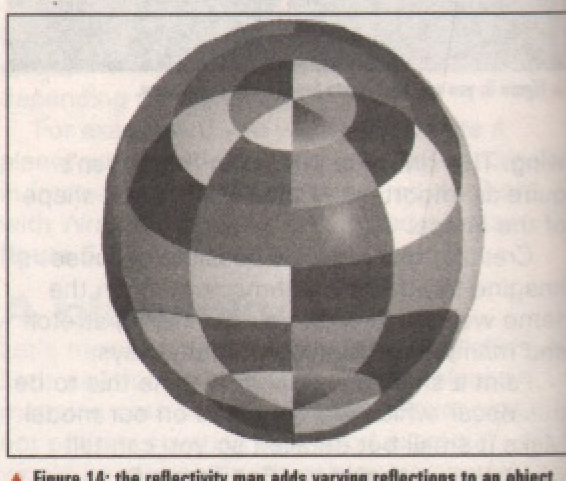
▲ Figure 13b: To create bumps that bump in use the Inverse Video.

stained-glass windows for example or to control complicated graded transparency effects. Black areas in the image are opaque, whilst white areas are transparent. Notice how you can see the other side of the object – you are looking right through it in places. **See figure 12.**

4. (Altitude) Bump Map
The colour of the brush is used to alter the height of the object. This is an excellent way to add texture to an object, although it takes experimentation to get it right – particularly in setting the height on the bumps (use Transform to set the Y value to about nine to start with). In this case the square pattern and some dots have been used. Placing the light source in the right place makes a big difference, as the bumps will show up with shading. Use the Inverse Video to provide bumps with bump in and bumps which bump out. **See figures 13a and 13b.**

Brush Map Hints

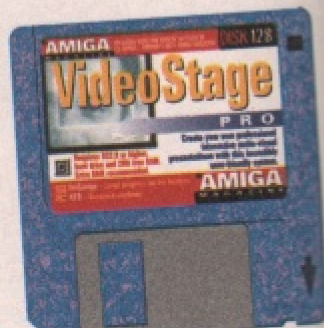
- Spend a great deal of time working on the brush maps as they will make all the difference to the final model.
- Use 24-bit images as brush maps if you can, as they will give best results.
- Use the smallest images you can as each brush map needs to be held in memory. If your finished render is 320 by 256 pixels, it makes no sense to create a 1024 by 1024 24 bit brush map. You'll run out of RAM!
- Remember that Imagine3 allows you to apply many maps to the same object. This means you can apply a texture, some decals and a bump map all to the same object.
- If you can't draw, remember that you can always scan or digitise brush maps instead. You can also buy disks full of suitable textures in IFF or JPEG format. (JPEGs will need to be converted to IFFs before use)
- When applying bump maps, try using the blur feature in many image processing packages to smear the details out. This can give better results.
- Imagine 3 can deal with multiple brushmaps. For each frame in an animation you can map a different image onto on object. If you can digitise some frames from video this is a great way to create a rendering television set.



▲ Figure 14: the reflectivity map adds varying reflections to an object.

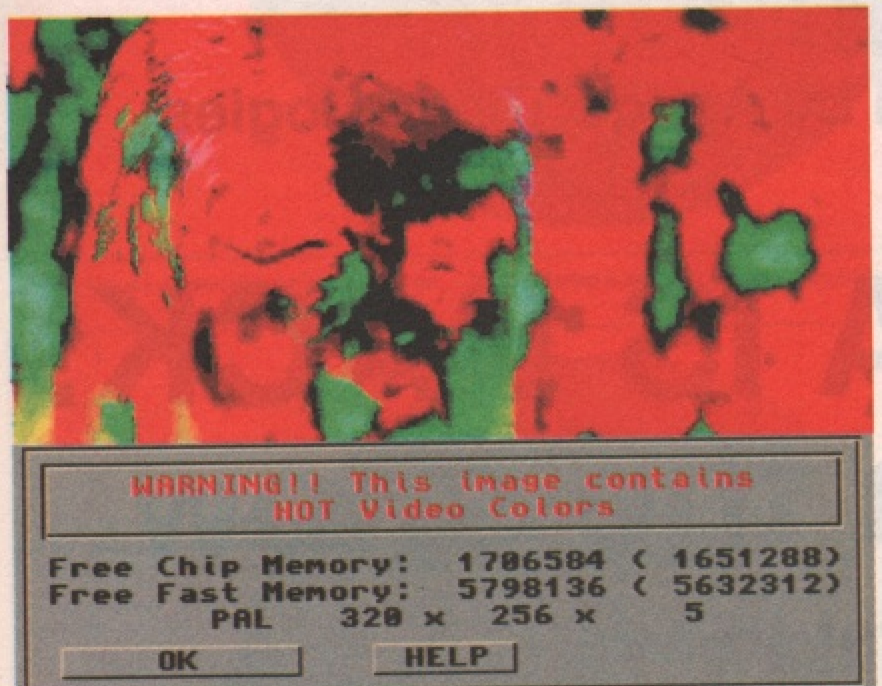
5. Reflection
This is very similar to a Reflectivity Map, except the brush is treated as though it were in the space surrounding the object, where it will be reflected in it if the object is itself reflective. Go on, try it for yourself but remember to change the attributes of the object so that it is reflective or you won't see anything! This technique is potentially useful if you need to add different reflections to different objects in a scene: for example, if you are making a very flash company logo effect. **See figure 14.**
John Kennedy

VideoStage Pro



PART 1

Continuing on from last month's feature we take a further look at what you can do with our cover disk 128 VideoStage Pro. Making your own video presentations has never been so easy.



▲ 'Hot' colours that would overload a composite video signal are automatically detected by VideoStage Pro.

Last month we cover mounted the excellent visual presentation system for video work, VideoStage Pro. We also covered most of its main attributes in our walk through guide to creating presentations with it. This tutorial will look at some of other features that we haven't yet covered with this great program.

On-line help

On-line help is available at any time when using VideoStage Pro – press the Help key to call it up. The relevant page of the help document will be displayed, depending on which part of the program you are using at the time. To view the entire help document, click on the Help button at the top and then navigate your way around it using the AmigaGuide controls.

Hot colours

Some colours when displayed on video produce a blurred look that will detract from the appearance of your work. These are bright, rich colours such as pure red. They're called 'hot' colours because they seem to burn into the video screen and leave a brief after image. Technically they are colours which would require illegal voltage levels in order to be represented in NTSC or composite PAL video.

VideoStage Pro checks for occurrences of hot colours. For example, when you load in a picture file, after you click on the Add Text/Objects button, you will be in the Text Entry panel. If there are hot colours in the image the Hot Colour indicator in the Text Entry panel should display Red, indicating the presence of hot colours.

To see which colours are hot, click on the Backdrop button or press F8. Now click on the Palette button (near the right edge of the panel). You'll now be presented with the Colour Adjustment window, from which you can highlight the hot colours by clicking on the Flash button. You can change any of the hot colours using the RGB sliders to reduce their intensity. Click on an area of the picture to select the required colour to be altered, or select it from the palette.

ARexx scripts

If you find that VideoStage doesn't do everything you'd like it too, you can use ARexx scripts to remotely control other programs or video devices from within VideoStage.

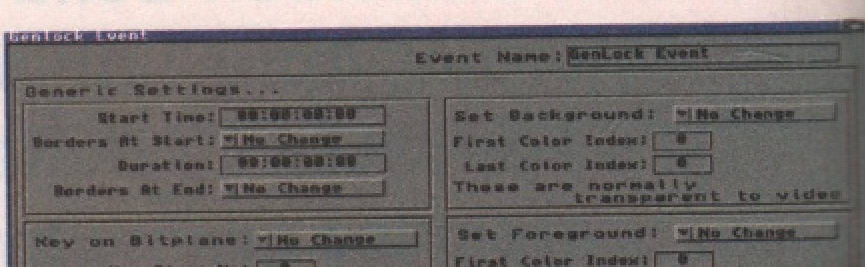
To call an ARexx script all you need to do is drag the ARexx Event icon onto the relevant part of the storyboard and then select the ARexx script that you want to execute. This means that you could, for example, replay OctaMED MIDI sequences by using an ARexx script to tell the OctaMED Player to start playing the current song. In this case you would of course need to have both ARexx (Rexx Mast) and the OctaMED Player running as well as VideoStage Pro. Check the documentation on your ARexx compatible software for specific details on how to control them using ARexx scripts.

Using genlocks

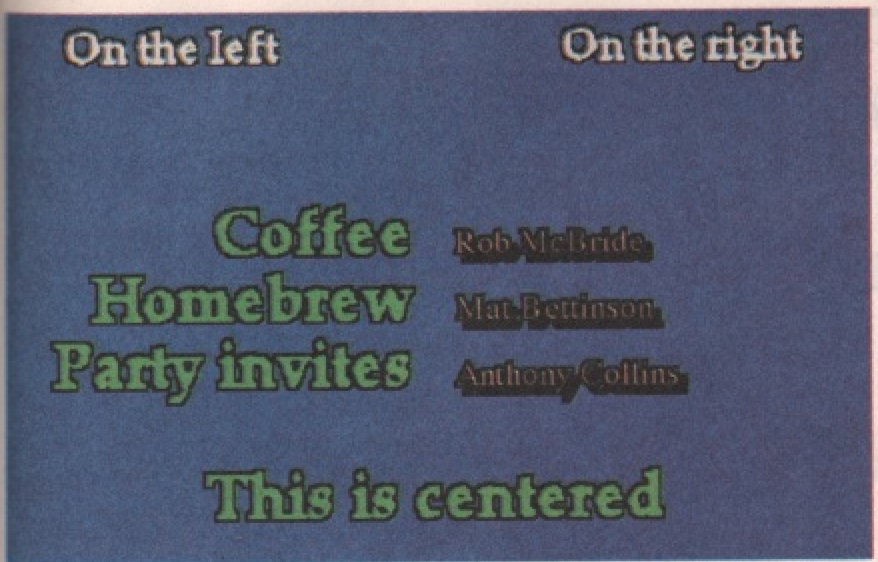
You can use any Amiga genlock with VideoStage Pro, but there's also specific built-in support for the GVP G-Lock and the SuperGen from Digital Creations. The program is normally set up for use with a generic (normal) genlock. This can be changed to either of the aforementioned genlocks from the Settings control panel.

To use the special genlock features, drag a Genlock Event icon onto the storyboard and click on it to bring up its options. The first option window will appear.

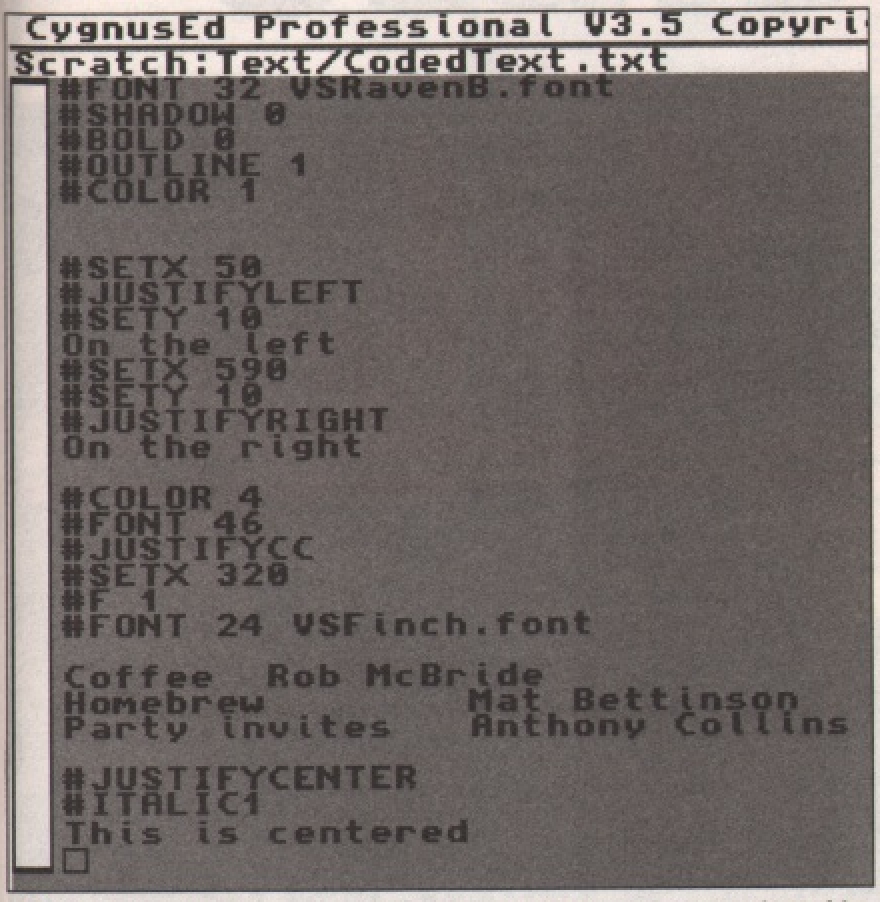
There are two times associated with a given genlock event, the start and end time. The end time is the start time plus a duration. This is due to the fact that some settings can be altered over a time interval, giving a sort of transition between the computer graphics and the live video coming into the genlock. The start and duration can be entered in this window and/or altered on the timeline. Bitplane keying (making certain areas transparent) is carried out at the start time only. You can also specify single colours or ranges of colours to be made transparent and/or opaque to the genlock. When more than one colour is involved, the range will be made transparent and/or opaque over



▲ If you have a genlock you can make use of the advanced palette control options for maximum control.



▲Text can be imported with ready-made formatting codes which saves you arranging things from VideoStage.



▲This is the original text file that was imported into VideoStage Pro to generate the screen at the top of the page. The lines starting with a '#' sign are the formatting codes. See the panel for more details on the codes.

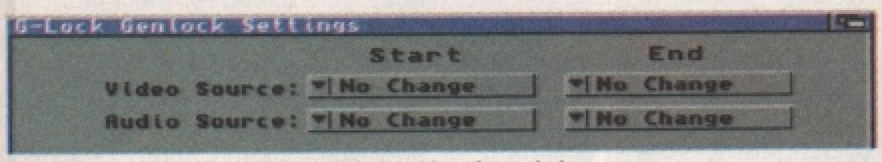
the time range. This allows you to have a picture gradually changing from opaque to transparent, or vice versa.

If you're using a G-Lock or SuperGen, you'll also see a second window, which will be different depending on which genlock you have selected.

The G-Lock window allows you to specify the video and audio source at both the start and end time. Remember that your G-Lock software must also be running for this to work.

For SuperGen users, the second window gives options for specifying the cross fade options of the genlock. This is done by entering the transparency of the computer graphics as a percentage, both at the start and end time, with 0% indicating all computer graphics, 100% indicating all video, and 50% an equal mix of the two. Enter a value of -1 for no change. Remember that you can change which part of the Amiga graphics acts as the background colour from the previous window. ■

Tony Horgan



▲There are specific options for both the G-Lock and SuperGen genlocks.

Coding text files

You'll probably remember from last month that you can import text files straight into VideoStage pages. What's more, you can even include all of the text formatting information within the text file, so as soon as it's imported it arranges itself neatly on the screen.

Adding the formatting codes from within the your text editor can be a lot quicker when you're working with large lists of credits.

The codes you enter in the text document relate to all the text on the lines below. For example, if you wanted to change the text to italics, you would enter "#ITALIC 1" on the line above the part you want to italicise. In this case the '#' sign indicates that a code will follow, 'ITALIC' is the code, and '1' means 'on' ('0' would mean 'off'). Not all codes need to be followed by a number.

These are the available codes for justification (note the American spelling: center).

```
#JUSTIFYLEFT
#JUSTIFYRIGHT
#JUSTIFYCENTER
#JUSTIFYCC
```

The following codes set the X and/or Y location of the text. Note that the Y value is for the top of the text, not the bottom nor the baseline. Replace 'value' with the position given in pixels:

```
#SETX value
#SETY value
```

Before you make changes to the fonts, you can select which of the two fonts you are addressing using the following code, where a value of 0 (zero) refers to the left font and 1 refers to the right font.

```
#F value
```

Now you can define the style of the font. All of the following use a value of 0 to represent off, and 1 to represent on.

```
#ITALIC value
#BOLD value
#UNDERLINE value
#OUTLINE value
```

The shadow option can have one of three value settings: 0 (off); 1 (cast shadow); 2 (drop shadow).

```
#SHADOW value
```

Font size and name can be set with the following code. Size should be specified in 'point' units while the name should correspond to the font name in the fonts drawer (eg. #FONT 8 Topaz.font).

```
#FONT size name
```

The three colours of the text can also be specified. The values correspond to the colours of the palette, so if the third colour in the palette was red, a value of 3 would lead to red text.

The following codes relate to the main colour, outline colour and shadow colour respectively (remember to use the American spelling: color).

```
#COLOR value
#OCOLOR value
#SCOLOR value
```

These codes can be used in any order and embedded throughout the text, so multiple font changes are possible.

That's all folks!

That concludes our look at VideoStage Pro. If you still need more information, remember that the on-line help is available at all times. Next month we continue our focus on desktop video with a look at Scala, the top presentation package currently bundled with all new Amigas.

Graphics Masterclass

What do you get when you cross Michelle Pfeiffer's eyes with Jeff Goldblum's face? Find out in this month's bit of graphical wizardry.

This month's graphics masterclass moves off in a new direction, on a mission to turn your Amiga into a state of the art graphics workstation. With a combination of hot software like Photogenics and Image FX linked to the Amiga's AGA chipset or even a 24-bit graphics board, you can do just about anything and that's just what we aim to prove.



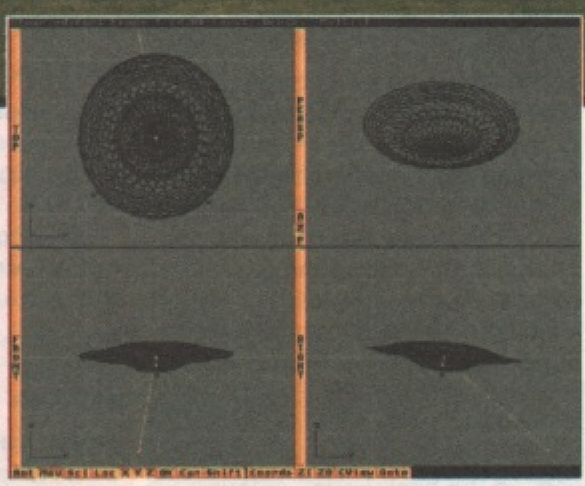
UFO sightings

Fact or fantasy? In this case it's fantasy. Whether you believe in the possibility or not there's plenty of mileage to be had when it comes to mocking up pictures of UFOs and other phenomena.

I'm not suggesting that you use your Amiga to make up some pictures and sell them to a popular publication for pots of cash, but ...

The picture we have here may not be the most convincing flying saucer shot you've ever seen but then again most of them are usually blurred and distorted more than this. Even so, if you were to take it seriously and spend some time on it, I'm sure you could come up with a photo-realistic image using the same techniques.

There are two main components in the image: the spaceship and the background picture. The spaceship was rendered with Imagine, using an object that comes with a little spot-light already attached. You'll find this in the Imagine drawer if you have the CD-ROM edition of this magazine. This was rendered with no fancy textures, but you could add something like the DeathStar texture for a neat panelled metal surface. In order to make the saucer blend into the background as naturally as possible, the light source was carefully aligned to match the lighting of the background picture. It was then rendered in 24-bit colour on a large screen and saved out to disk.



▲ Here's our Stonehenge UFO getting ready to make its debut. It's all symmetry man.

Next it was loaded into Image FX to be added to the Stonehenge backdrop. Using the automatic background detection mode, it was cut out, scaled and pasted down onto the backdrop. If you prefer to use Photogenics, the Compose function does the job just as well.

Finally it was touched up from within Photogenics with some motion blur, blending and a few dots were added for the lights. All that remains is to send it off to *Gullible Alien Theories Monthly* along with a story about how you were abducted just after you took this photo a pagan summer solstice ritual.

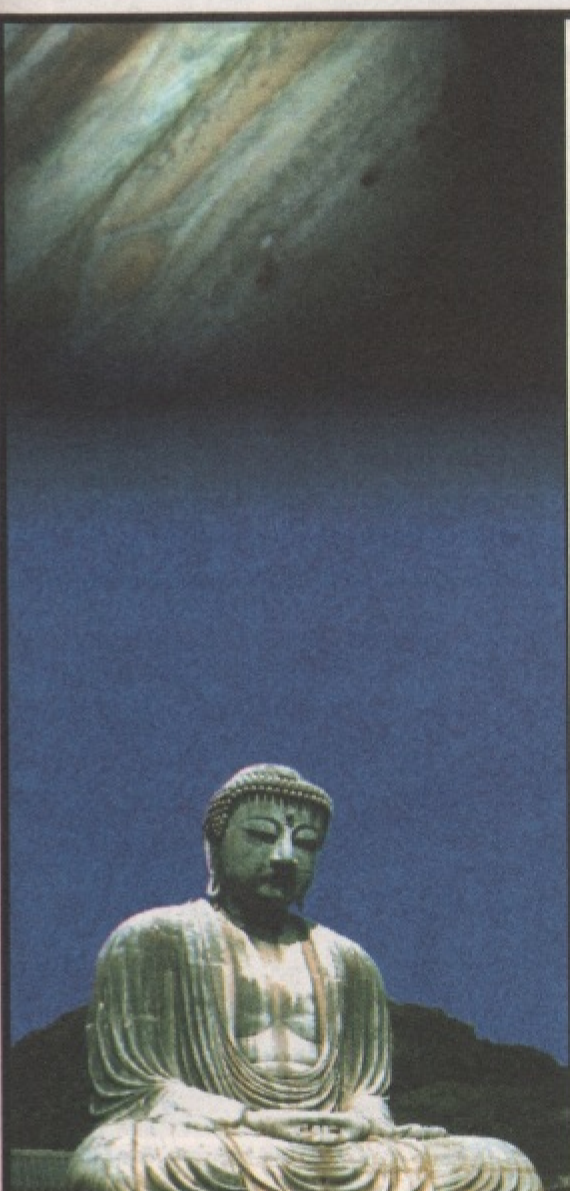
Sexy eyes

Who do you think this is? The eyes are those of Michelle Pfeiffer and rest is the face of Jeff Goldblum. This is a simple example of a subtle rub through effect. It was created with Photogenics, although the same result could be achieved with Image FX. The two source images are from the Nothing But GIFs CD-ROM and were chosen because both faces fitted the frame of the picture in a similar way.

However, a rub through alone still highlighted the different positions of the features (the eyes appearing above the others). To correct this, one of the pictures was cropped and scaled to match the other. This is simple to do with Photogenics, as you can see both pictures at once, each in its own window. Image FX requires you to switch buffers to compare them (use the J key to speed things up).

All that remains now is to select a subtle brush type, such as the default Airbrush from Photogenics, draw over the features and marvel as the second face appears like a spooky ghost!



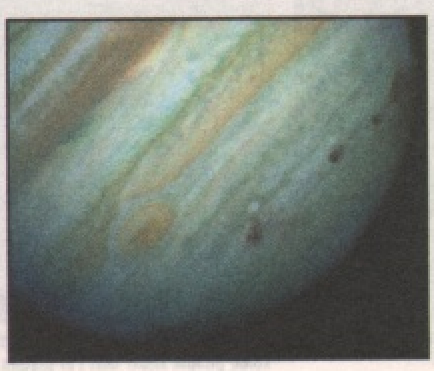


Spiritual harmony

There's no reason to become locked into the habit of producing rectangular 640 x 512 pixel pictures, just because that's the shape of your monitor. This picture, for example, could be reproduced as a poster or wall hanging, or even used as a scrolling backdrop in an Amiga demo or video presentation.

Photogenics was the tool used to create it. The first Buddha image came from the Nothing But GIFs CD and originally had a blue sky backdrop. This was painted solid 100% blue with a number of Fill processes and then saved out.





Next a blank page was created (solid 100% blue), the same width as the Buddha picture but a lot taller. The Buddha was pasted onto the bottom, and then the entire backdrop was filled using the Gradient Tint option. At this point you may encounter some problems. Filling the majority of a 640 x 1200 pixel 24-bit image requires quite a lot of RAM and even on a 10Mb machine a few tricks had to be employed to get it to work. With undo buffers turned off and other software closed down, it performed the fill eventually. As you work, memory gets fragmented, so sometimes it's a good idea to save your image, turn the machine off for a few seconds, then power up again.

The finishing touch was the planet in the sky. This was added using the Compose function, with the Brightness Key switched on. A few pixels of the planet image seemed to be corrupt, but a quick smoothing over with the Blur function was enough to sort them out.

These pictures are on the CD



If you have the CD-ROM edition of this magazine, you'll find all these pictures along with the source images and 'work in progress' snapshots in a drawer called Magazine/GraphicsMasterclass.

Wired World

PART 9

A picture's worth a thousand words ... so why limit your Email to text? With Mime you can include graphics, sounds - even animations.



If you been using electronic mail or lurking around in the Usenet newsgroups, you will probably have come across files which have been uuencoded. Uuencoding is a method of converting a standard binary file, for example a program or IFF image, into a mass of text. The text can then be sent via Email or included in a news posting.

Uuencoding is required because text systems only use 7 bits out of 8 to store the various letters and punctuation symbols. If you sent a program and missed out one bit in eight, whatever arrived at the other end would be totally useless.

Multipurpose Internet Mail Extensions (Mime) is an attempt at making this uuencoding process as simple as possible. It too encodes binary files into text format but this time uses a slightly different standard called Base64. However, the important thing is the way in which the Mime mailing program works.

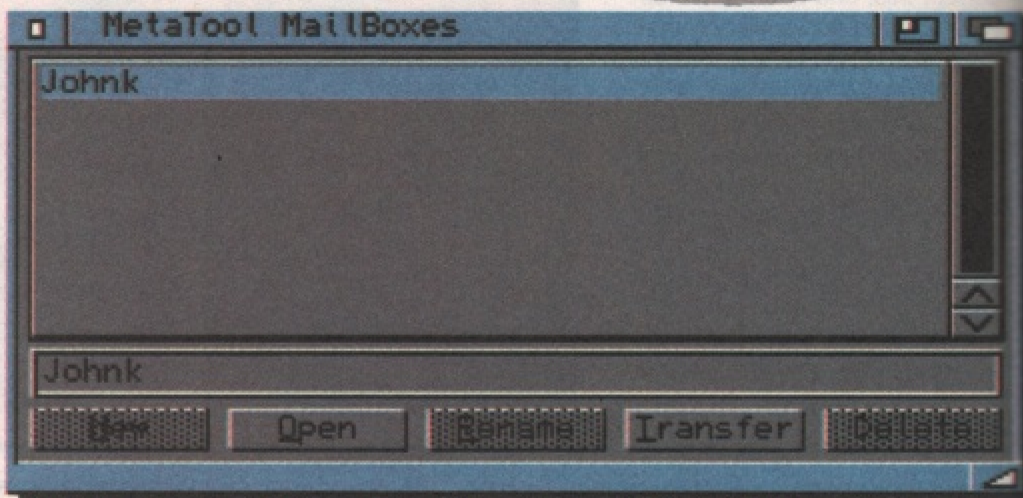
The ultimate

Unlike the traditional uuencode way, the user does not need to play around with messy CLI only utilities. Instead, they only need drag a file or two into a special window and it is converted automatically. Each file is converted into a Mime 'partial' and included in the mail message. Even more impressive is what happens when the message reaches its destination. If set up properly, an image will automatically be displayed and a MED tune automatically played. making it the ultimate way to exchange data by electronic mail.

A must have

To use Mime on the Amiga, you'll need a program called MetaTool. MetaTool was written by Ellis Pritchard and is available from the Aminet. I'm assuming that you already have an Email system operating on the Amiga and therefore have experience with either a Mailkick or AmiPOP program for sending and receiving mail. For example, if you are a Demon customer you'll be using the SendMail program for handling the mail transfer.

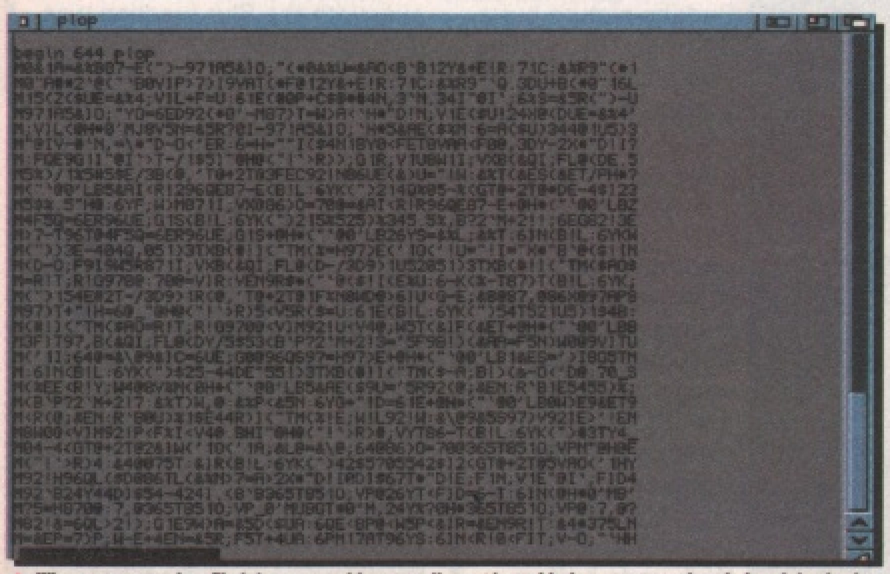
Before you can start using MetaTool, you will need to make sure that you have set up some environmental variables. These sound horrendous but it only means that you need to include the settings for your user name, domain name and host name. The user name will be the name of your internet postbox and this will be the first name you picked when you signed up with your service provider. The domain name is the section you didn't pick yourself after the @ sign in your Email address and the host name ie the part you chose. For example, my Email address is 'johnk@infosys2.thegap.com' and so I set up the variables as in **figure 1**. If your address was 'brian@toastrack.demon.co.uk' then you would set the variables like **figure 2**. You can either type these directly into the Shell every time you re-boot your Amiga, or save yourself a lot of time and include



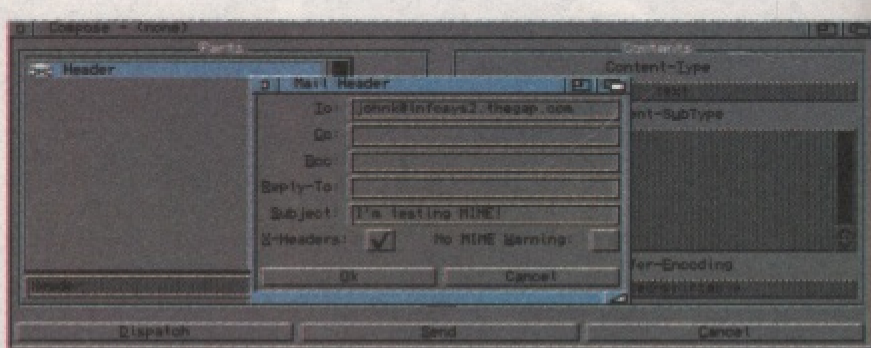
▲ MetaTool organises the mail into different mailboxes. The name comes from the USERNAME environmental variable.

Figure 1

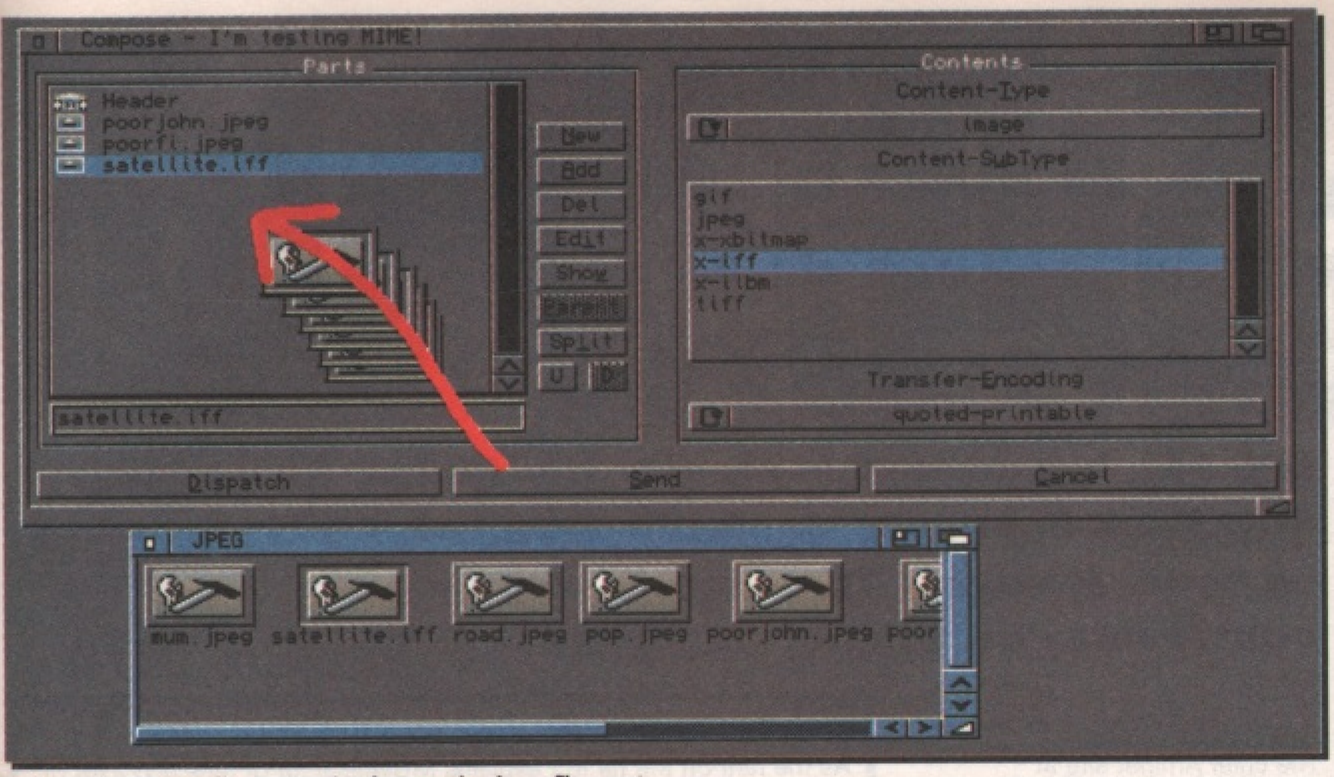
```
setenv USER Johnk
setenv DOMAINNAME the gap.com
setenv HOST infosys-2
```



▲ When you uuencode a file it is converted into text. You can't read it, but you can uudecode it to bring back the original file.



▲ You can send copies of your mail message to others by including names in other fields. Here I'm letting some people know that I'm testing Mime.



▲ You can drag-and-drop files or create them from scratch and use a file requester.

Figure 2

```
setenv USER brian
setenv DOMAINNAME demon.co.uk
setenv HOST toastrack
```

Figure 3

```
text/x-aguide; MultiView %s; label="An AmigaGuide file"; edit="emacs %s"
```

them in your s:user-startup file. You may find that they have been created for you when you installed AmiTCP: you can check by typing setenv by itself and see watch to see if USER, DOMAINNAME and HOST whizz past.

You'll also need to use everyone's favourite Graphical User Interface, Magic User Interface. If you are a heavy Internet user you will probably already have MUI installed to let you run AMosic or IBrowse.

Starting MetaTool should be painless if you remembered the right setenv commands. You'll see your 'majl box' included in the list. Open it up and you are ready to send a Mime message. Press Right Amiga-N to create a new message. You see the compose window appear and there will already be one element in the list on the left. This is the 'header' and you should select it and press the EDIT button. Now you can enter the Email address of the recipient and any subject the message may have.

Drag 'n' drop

The easiest way to create a message is to drag and drop icons into the window. Create a text file and save it. Then find the icon and drag it into the window. You can drag and drop IFF images, LHA files or just about anything you can imagine. MeTatool will package them all up and when you click on SEND or DISPATCH it will use the mailer program you have running to send the message over the Internet.

You can also create parts of the message manually, without dragging and dropping. Click on the NEW button and you can select the type of the object you want to send. You will then be given a file requester so you can select the file.

When you receive a Mime message, you can view it in MetaTool simply by clicking on the constituent parts in the message list. But how does the Amiga know what to do with each type of file? This is the tricky section but it's the only way to really harness the power of the Mime system.

MimeTypes

To alter what happens to existing files or to add support for your own specific application programs, you will need to enter the murky world of the files called 'mailcap' and 'mime.types'. Both are in the MetaTool drawer and you should edit both with a standard text editor. Before you start message about with them, it might be a good idea to make a copy.

The first file, mime.types, is to help MetaTool work out what sort of file you have just dropped on top of it. By default it will recognise many graphics formats, as well the Amiga specific AmigaGuide format. Here is how the AmigaGuide format is included:

```
text/x-aguid  guide GUIDE
```

It's nothing too amazing: the file is obviously text based, so the definition begins with 'text/'. It's not a standard extension so there is an 'x-' added to make this clear. Then we have the possible file extension names in upper and lower case.

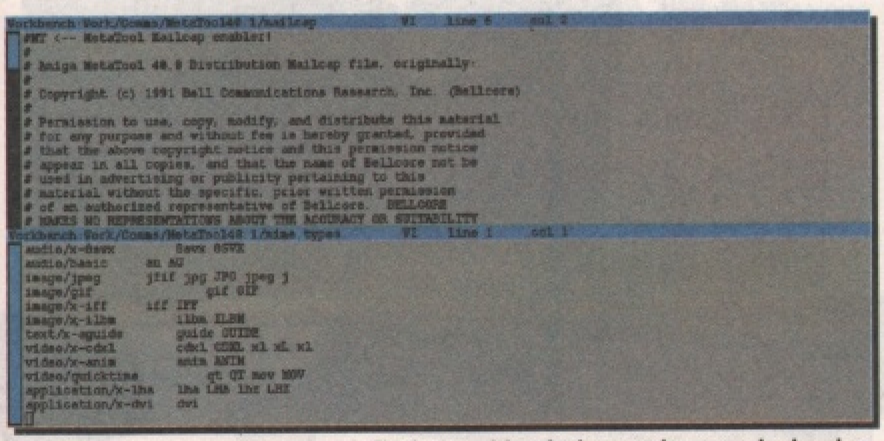
The mailcap file tells MetaTool what to do when a Mime file is received. **Figure 3** shows how it mentions AmigaGuide files:

The matching line in the mailcap file tells MetaTool that when a x-aguide file is shown, the Amiga must use Multiview. That's what the section 'MultiView %s' means, as the '%s' will be replaced with the filename.

The last part of the line tells MetaTool what to do when the file is edited. In this case, the emacs program is spawned. You may not have emacs on your Amiga and you may want to edit this line to reflect your own choice, such as CygnusEd or GoldEd.

You can extend this system yourself to both control what application is triggered to take card of an incoming partial and to add support for many other file types. As long as both your system and the system of whoever you are sending the message to have suitable entries in mime. types and mailcap you should be able to send anything by Email. ■

John Kennedy



▲ Mailcap and meta.types are the two magic files for determining what happens when you send and receive Mime mail.



▲ Cruel but funny – Mime can be used to send pictures as easily as text. I don't think I'll be forgiven for a while when my subject claps eyes on this image of her.



Net God speaks

AT's Surf Amiga Pack is currently only on sale in Berlin as a marketing exercise before it is released to the rest of the world. Soon to be released to the rest of us via the normal Amiga distribution channels, it's caused quite a debate.

The main cause for concern is because it consists of a stock 2Mb A1200 bundled with software largely reliant on MUI. Anti MUI types moan about the fact that MindWalker (formerly the Voyager browser), AmIRC and AmFTP are all reliant on MUI. Whilst MUI advocates criticise the decision to supply a machine with only 2Mb specification. Although I can see valid points on both sides I fall into the latter group (because IMHO MUI is a good thing). However, getting on the Internet on a 2Mb machine was going to be hard enough but with MUI ... Let's just say that I'm eagerly awaiting the software suite so that I can witness AS225, MUI and Mind Walker actually running in 2Mb of memory. It seems to me that AT can't have it both ways. They can't argue that the Amiga is so efficient that it'll function with 2Mb of RAM whilst simultaneously bundling next generation resource hungry software. The sooner we have a 4Mb base specification the better.

Surf's up!

Big, big, big news this month: the Amiga Technologies Surf Pack is on sale. In Berlin. Don't worry it'll be with us soon. However, it's already whipping up a storm of controversy on the net ...

Aminet goes down

The chief Aminet site at Washington University in St. Louis USA has crashed spectacularly due to a hard drive failure in the middle of February, at the time of writing of this article. Ordinarily, a simple fault that could be repaired quickly, it's a different matter when you're talking about 64 Gigabytes of hard drives going down. The system was still down at time of going to press. Only when we at CU Amiga are without our regular Aminet feed do we appreciate exactly how wonderful a thing the Aminet is. Blank lines are piling up on the recent lists and Amiga PD/shareware junkies the world over are wishing Wuarchive a speedy recovery at the earliest opportunity. Wuarchive, please come back to us!

New network provider

IMM Studios have announced a move into Internet providing. An internet 'Cybermall' is to be launched soon selling a range of Amiga hardware and software including the A4000T thereby allowing customers to view before they buy. After sales technical support will also be on offer. The Amiga network consists of many Amigas from the A1200 to an A4000/060 specially used for CD32 Scala presentations which are implemented and then pressed onto CDs for interactive touch screen kiosks. IMM say many more projects are due to come on-line in the next month. At the moment no dial in access is available although users are able to hire web space for personal design or contract IMM to design WWW pages for them. You can contact them on `http://www.immstudios.com/amilon`

Non MUI WWW wins favour

As the rant on the far left explains MUI has a lot of fans and a lot of enemies. The current crop of WWW browsers on the Amiga, both on general release and in Beta, use MUI to formulate the complex GUIs needed for such features as Forms etc. Lately, however, a new Dutch bowser by the name of AWeb has been in Beta testing. It's simple non-MUI interface and its stable nature (unlike much of the crash prone competition) has found favour among many users. An official AWeb demo can be found on CU Amiga's CD complete with documentation in HTML format. There's also quite a bit of other WWW pages present so check it out in the Comms drawer if you have the CD issue. AWeb's author, Yvon Rozijn, is continuing development on AWeb and hopes to make a general HTML-2 release in March (the CD version is limited to local access). For further information contact: `http://huizen.dds.nl/~aweb/`

Termite TCP at WOA London

Oregon Research, the company responsible for the Termite terminal package, has announced plans to show a new TCP/IP package at the World of Amiga show in London on April 13th-14th. Oregon say the package was written from scratch to provide a TCP/IP package which requires no knowledge of networking or communications and features completely automatic installation and connection to Internet services. The ensemble of provided clients and utilities is not yet determined nor has a retail price been set. Oregon say they originally planned to release the package at WOA but this has been delayed due to illness.

Hi-Soft distribute IBrowse

The MUI based WWW Browser, IBrowse, is probably the most fully featured browser currently available on the net. The authors have always aimed to release it commercially but only recently have announced that Softwood will distribute it in the US and Hi-Soft in the UK. A demo beta of IBrowse is available at `http://www.omnipresence.com/ibrowse/` ■



▲ The new Amiga surfer pack: the cause of much on-line controversy.

Sound Lab FAQ Special



We get asked all kinds of questions about Amiga sound. Here are some of the most common.

Q. Why can't I use stereo samples in Amiga trackers like OctaMED and Protracker?

A.
A stereo sample is two mono samples and trackers work on the basis of four mono channels. The Amiga has only two stereo channels and you can't play a stereo sound through a mono channel. However, if different samples are played on each side of these two stereo channels, then four different sounds can be produced simultaneously.

Q. My Amiga 1200 uses 32-bit technology, so why can I only play 8-bit samples?

A.
Most of your Amiga uses 32-bit components, but the Paula chip, which handles the sound among other things, has 8-bit architecture. Unfortunately this was not upgraded when the rest of the Amiga architecture jumped to 32-bits.

Q. Why doesn't my Amiga appear to slow down, even when it's playing a high quality music module?

A.
The audio hardware gets on with the business of playing samples without having to trouble the CPU while it does so, leaving the CPU free to handle all of its other tasks, hence there's no noticeable slow down.

Q. Some module players claim to play modules in 14-bit resolution. How come?

A.
The Amiga's sound channels have 8-bit resolution with an extra four bits per channels for the volume information. These bits are combined resulting in a total of 14-bit output.

Q. Why do none of the Amiga music programs allow you to play samples in reverse?

A.
They use the Amiga's built-in sample replay functions, which do not include reverse sample replay. However, OctaMED SoundStudio will allow this when it is released.

Q. I want to play very large sound samples straight from my hard drive. Is this possible?

A.
Yes. Technosound Turbo II Pro will record and replay samples as large as your spare hard drive space. There are also PD tools that do the same thing, such as HD Frequency. OctaMED SoundStudio also promises this.

Q. I want to load modules from demos into my tracker to find out how they were made. Can I do this with single file executable demos or demos that use a strange disk format?

A.
Yes. You need a 'ripper'. There are many rippers available in the public domain. You load the demo, then quit or reset and run the ripper program. This searches the memory for modules and saves them out to disk if it finds any.

Q. When I sample sounds from my hi-fi I always get some interference. Where does this come from and what can I do about it?

A.
This could be generated by a number of things: your monitor or TV, extra peripherals you may have plugged into your Amiga, or even an internal hard drive. Disconnect everything and try sampling with the absolute minimum set-up, then add more to the system until you find what is making the noise.

Q. What's the best sampler to use?

A.
Most 8-bit samplers are very similar in design and there's little to chose between them. CU Amiga Magazine's preference is Megalosound from HiSoft. DSS8 Plus, available from Power Computing, is another good one.

Q. What's the best 16-bit sampler?

A.
The best value 16-bit sampler is Aura from HiSoft. Toccata (see review this issue) from MacroSystem is preferred by many and has good support from OctaMED SoundStudio. The Sunrize AD516 is the best you can buy and is used by many professionals for digital audio-visual work.

Q. Will 16-bit samplers replace my Amiga's four 8-bit channels with four 16-bit channels?

A.
Aura adds a stereo 12-bit channel, Toccata adds a stereo 16-bit channel, and Sunrize AD516 adds two stereo 16 bit channels. This is in addition to the original Amiga audio channels which remain available exactly as they always were.

Q. What is the difference between a tracker and a sequencer?

A.
A tracker works primarily with Amiga samples. Notes are entered onto a scrolling numeric display, with optional commands entered to alter the way samples are played. They normally have an integrated sampler and sample editor section. Some, such as OctaMED, can also play and record MIDI instruments. A sequencer is geared towards recording and playing MIDI instruments, normally with limited facilities for replaying Amiga samples. Many 'traditional' musicians find the style of a sequencer much easier to use than a tracker. To generalise, notes are programmed into a tracker, but played into a sequencer.

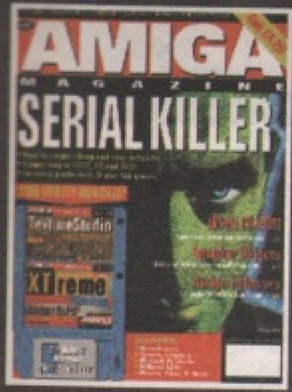
Q. What is the best tracker available?

A.
There are two main contenders: ProTracker and OctaMED. There are also many other similar trackers, all of which are PD or shareware, each with its own particular strengths.

Q. What is the best sequencer around?

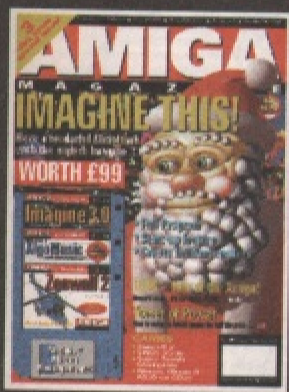
A.
This is another two horse race. In this case the horses are Bars and Pipes Pro and Music X 2.0. Bars and Pipes offers a lot more power and flexibility, thanks to its modular system that allows plug-ins to be written for linking to a variety of hardware and software, such as AD516, Triple Play Plus (48-way MIDI interface), One Stop Music Shop (Proteus synth on a Zorro card), Toccata and more. Music X scores with its relative simplicity, some unique working methods and because it has been around long enough to build up a large following. ■

Tony Horgan.



QUIDS IN!

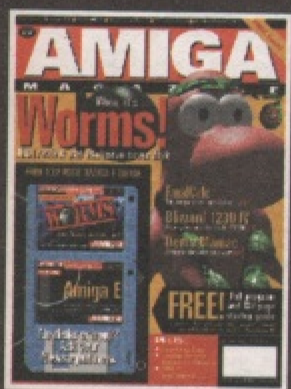
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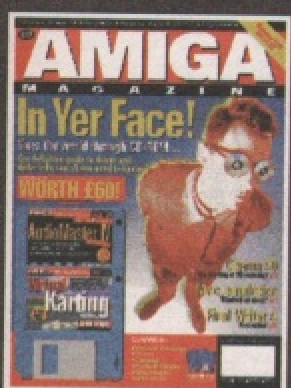
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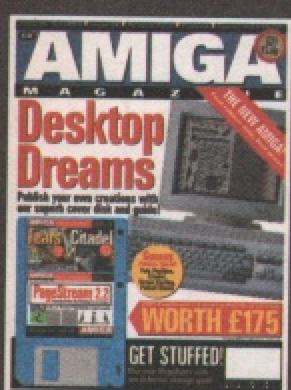
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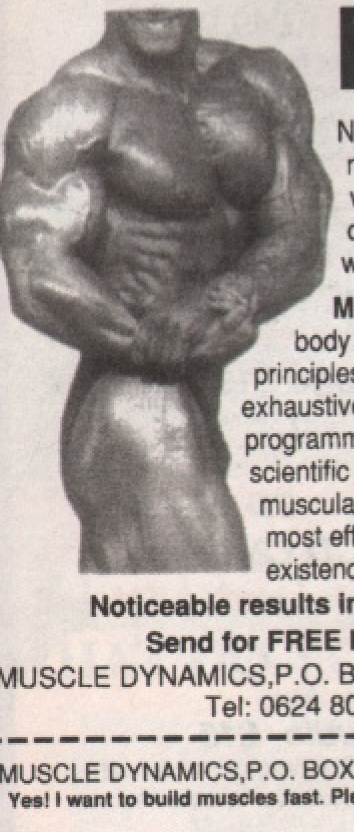
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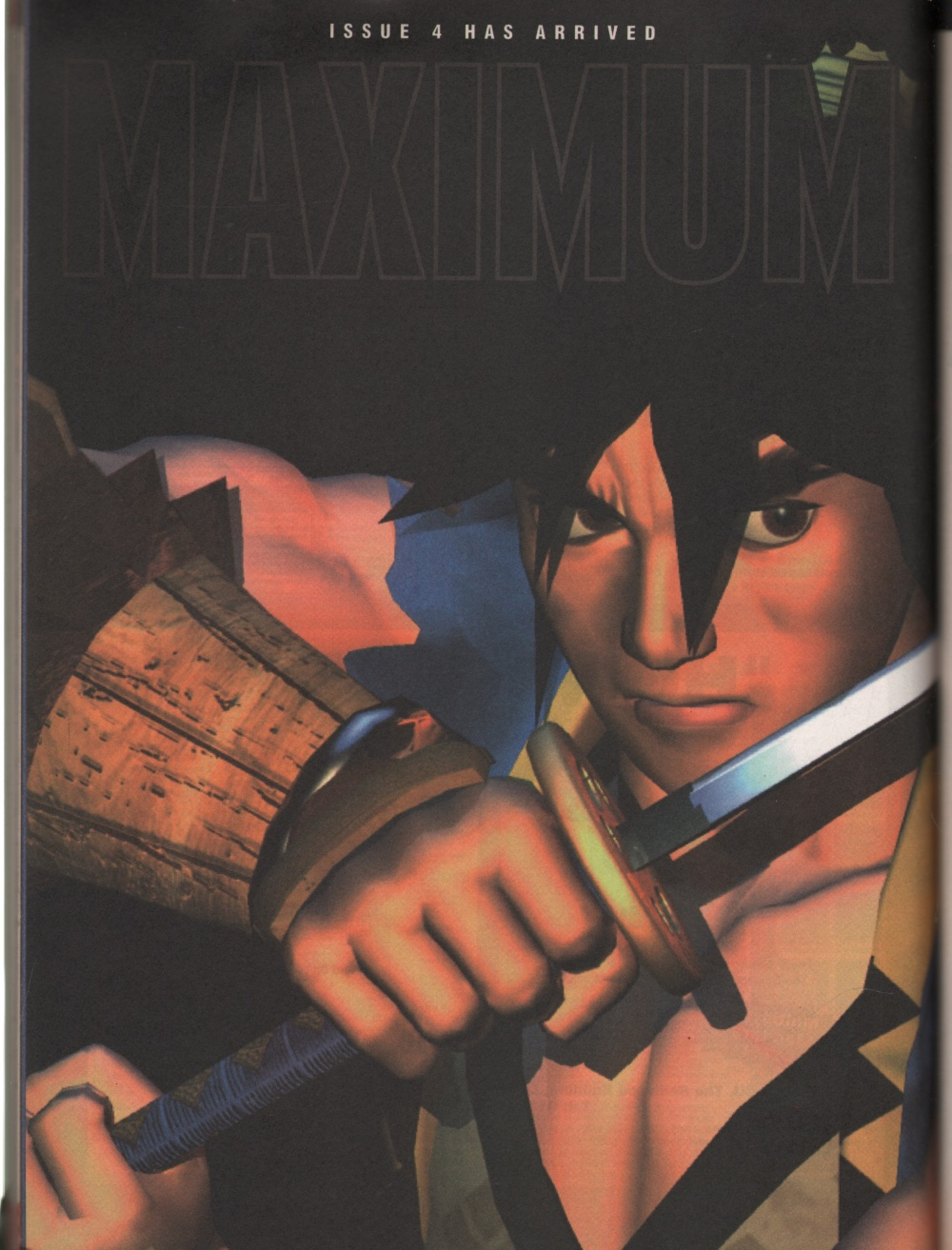
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ISSUE 4 HAS ARRIVED
MAXIMUM



Frequently asked questions

Everything you ever wanted to know about networking ...

Q. What's the easiest way to connect two Amigas?

A. The simplest way is to use a Null modem cable to link up their serial ports. You can then run a comms program on each Amiga (for example, Term or NComm) and use the X, Y or Z Modem protocol to transmit files.

Q. Is this how networked games work?

A. Yes, nearly all networked games on the Amiga work using a Null modem cable connected between the two machines.

Q. Games aside, is there a better way?

A. Yes. The serial port isn't amazingly fast. OK, if you connect two Amiga 1200s fitted with HiSoft's new Surf Squirrel PCMCIA device, things will be a lot faster but there is still a better way of linking the machines: the parallel ports for example.

Q. What software do I need for linking Amigas with the serial ports?

A. You can use ordinary terminal emulation software such as NComm or Termite on the Amiga, and Teminate on the PC. Then set the baud rates and other settings to be the same and use Zmodem to copy the files across. You could also use the program 'TwinExpress' which is available from the Aminet and PD libraries. It makes sending files a lot simpler by running a custom utility on each machine.

Q. Can I link two Amigas via their Parallel ports and use the comms software as before?

A. No, you can't. Parallel ports are not designed with communications in mind and so you will need special software. The best known system is ParNet and the best distribution is called ParBench. Setting up ParNet can be very hard and the ParBench system includes an official Commodore Installer system to make it a lot easier. Ask your PD library for ParBench or get it yourself from Aminet.

Q. Apart from speed, why is ParNet better than a serial link?

A. ParNet provides true networking features (although not terribly advanced ones). This means when the Amigas are linked there is a new device on each machine called NET: and this is a link into the remote hardware. It means that one Amiga could use the hard drive or CD-ROM drive of a second Amiga.

Q. What sort of cable do I need for this?

A. You need a special cable and instructions for constructing it are given in the ParNet archive. You must not connect a standard parallel port to parallel port cable, as this will damage the Amigas. You must make (or buy) a cable designed for use on the Amiga.

Q. Can I network a CD32 in this way?

A. Yes, although there are various reasons why this is tricky. It's best to buy a CD-ROM and lead kit already made up, from a dealer such as Brian Fowler Computers.

Q. Is there another way of linking Amigas via parallel ports?

A. Yes, you can use a commercial system called Liana. Liana comes with a special parallel cable but the software support is offered through 'Envoy'. Blittersoft sell Liana in the UK.

Q. I've heard of Envoy, what is it?

A. Envoy is the standard Amiga networking package, written by an ex-Commodore employee. It is a commercial product, currently at version 2. It is more advanced than ParNET and offers a lot of features, such as the ability to share printers, full security and inter-network routing. It also is 'hardware independent' in that it doesn't mind which hardware the network uses, as long as there is a suitable driver.

Q. Is Envoy available for other hardware?

A. Yes, as long as there is a suitable driver, called a SANA2.driver. This is an Amiga standard for networking support. For example, the AmiTrix networking system uses the floppy disk port and it can run Envoy as well. Envoy will also run over Ethernet.

Q. What is Ethernet and can I use it?

A. Ethernet is a fast networking standard used on PCs and other computers. It allows transfer speeds of up to 10Mbit/second over various types of cable. Many machines can be linked together over Ethernet. It is possible to buy Amiga specific network cards for Amigas with Zorro slots (BlitterSoft sell the Ariadne card). It's also possible to buy a GoldenGate 2 card and fit a PC Ethernet card (EyeTech sell the GG2 in various bundles).

Q. Can I use Ethernet on an Amiga without Zorro slots?

A. There are no A1200 Ethernet cards currently advertised in the UK, although there are rumours of some available in the US. Sadly, although PCMCIA and Parallel port Ethernet adapters are available for the PC, no one has created a version for the Amiga.

Q. Can I link my Amiga to a PC network?

A. If you have an Ethernet card, yes, you can set up both the Amiga and the PC to use the TCP/IP transmission protocol and link the machines in that way. This makes it possible to run Telnet, FTP and even X Windows systems. If you don't have an Ethernet card, there are still ways to link up the Amiga at least in theory. One approach would be to use a SLIP or PPP connection into an Amiga running Windows95 or a version of Unix such as Linux.

Q. How advanced is a TCP/IP network?

A. In terms of filesystem support, not very. You can copy files using FTP but if you have used this you'll appreciate that it is basic to say the least. One possible solution is to use a Novel style network system, but details of Novel support on the Amiga is sketchy to say the least. More promising is the version of a program called SAMBA which has appeared on Aminet. This aims to mount PC Windows Workgroups on the Amiga and vice versa, which would be a very flexible method of working. ■

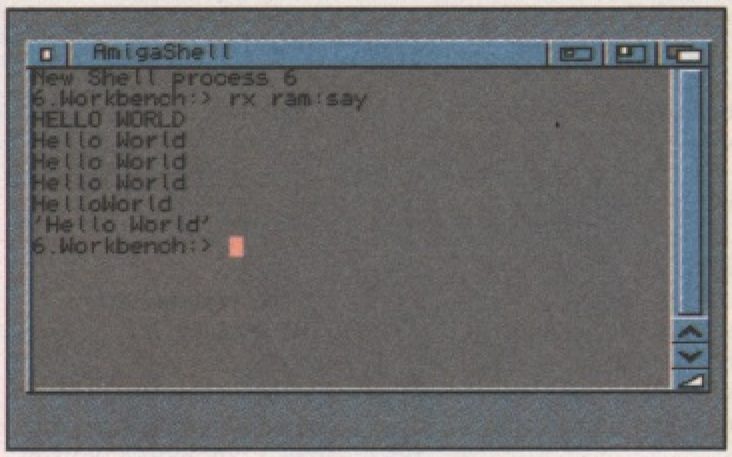
John Kennedy

Masterclass ARexx

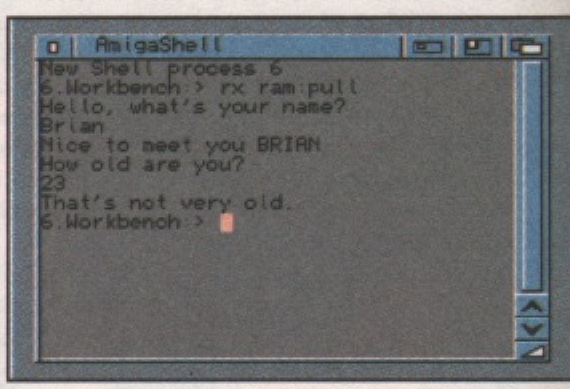
PART 2

We've looked at what Arexx is all about, now we're onto to bigger things such as how it works.

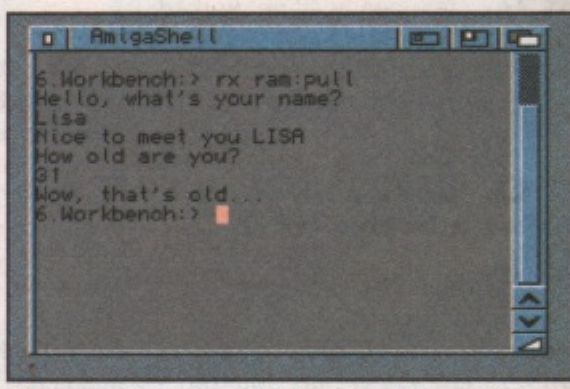
For those of you unfortunate enough to have missed last month's issue let me recap: ARexx is a very useful programming language. What can you do with it? Write programs is the obvious answer, and by golly that's what we'll do. ARexx looks a little like the well-known programming language BASIC, but it is considerably more flexible. Not only does it include many powerful commands but it can control other programs and be expanded to include support for, as an example, standard Windows and Menus.



▲ Figure 1: The best way to get to grips with the SAY command is to run the above program with RX.



▲ Figure 2: here we can see that the first pull takes in the name while the second pull takes in the numeric value which in this case is age.



▲ Figure 2a: (Oi – Lisa), I am not 31 do you hear. I'm a spritely 27 years old and don't you forget it.

What makes her tick?

Last month we saw how to install ARexx and run a simple program. Now we'll look at some more programming examples to get an idea as to the way in which ARexx works. First, let's examine the SAY command as it can be slightly trickier than you might expect. The best way to discover its secrets is to enter the following program and execute it. To do this, create a text file which contains the listing, save it and then use 'RX' followed by the filename. Do not simply type this into a Shell, as it won't work. (see example 1)

Example listing 1

```
/* Say examples */
SAY Hello world
SAY "Hello World"
SAY 'Hello World'
SAY "Hello" "World"
SAY "Hello"||"World"
SAY "'Hello World'"
```

When you run the program with RX you'll see something like figure 1 (top left):

The first thing to note is that the program, like all ARexx programs, starts with a comment. If you leave the comment out the program won't run. Now we come to six different ways of putting text on the screen. The first method uses no form or quotes – only text. You can see that ARexx displays it as upper case.

The subsequent examples use quote makes. You can use either single or double, as long as you are consistent: the first two quoted examples will produce identical results. You can also see that splitting the words into two and adding quotes to each automatically adds a space. If you don't want a space, use the concatenate command (||) which joins the two text strings together without introducing any extra characters. Finally, if you want to include quotation marks, use a different sort – imagine the outmost pair being removed.

With output mastered, we can now learn how to make programs more interactive my getting input from the user. The simplest way to do this is with the PULL command, which waits at the Shell for something to be entered, (see example 2, figure 2 and 2a)

Example listing 2

```
/* Pull examples */
SAY "Hello, what's your name?"
PULL name
SAY "Nice to meet you" name
SAY "How old are you?"
PULL age
IF age > 28 THEN SAY "Wow, that's old..."
ELSE SAY "That's not very old."

EXIT
```

The first PULL takes in a text string and converts it into upper case (we don't ask for this to happen, it just does). The second PULL takes in a numeric value. There is no distinction between the text and number PULLs as far as we are concerned, it's up to ARexx to keep track of which is text and which is a number. The IF-THEN-ELSE statements do a little processing and that is all there is to it.

Variables

We can't go much further without touching on the concept of variables. Variables are locations in the Amiga's memory which store specific values and are referenced by a special name.

For example, when we asked for your age using PULL, ARexx creat-

ed a variable and stored a number in it. ARexx deals with variables in a very flexible way: when it comes across some text which doesn't mean anything to it, it assumes it's a variable. If the variable hasn't been used before (that is, it hasn't been initialised) then it has as a value its own name in upper case.

This is why our very first example, SAY Hello world, did what it did. ARexx thought "Hello" and "World" were two variables and so printed them. As the default contents of a variable is its own name in upper case, the program display "HELLO WORLD".

Now here is an example of how you can make variables which store more than one value. Lets say we need to store the names of five different types of fish, for the start of an excellent Fish Database program. We could use five separate variables and get the names like this:

```
.. PULL first-fish
PULL second-fish
PULL third-fish
PULL fourth-fish
PULL five-fish ..
```

and so on. However, this would make the program rather lengthy. It would also be very hard to expand the program at a later date to include more than five fish.

A better way is to use a compound variable – a variable which has a single base name but stores different values depending on the associated name appended with a full-stop. Erm... here, look at example 3.

Example listing 3

```
/* Variable examples */
SAY "Five fish please"
DO i = 1 TO 5
    PULL fish.i
END
SAY "Here is the list..."
DO i=1 TO 5
SAY fish.i
IF fish.i = "HADDOCK" THEN SAY "Hah! I
knew you would say Haddock"
END

EXIT
```

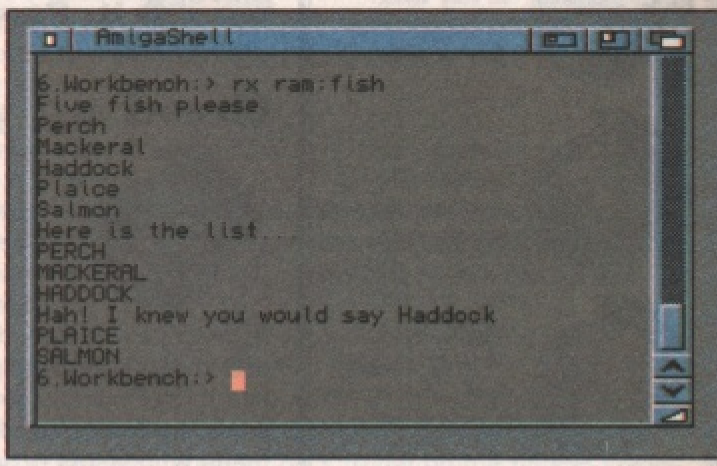
When it is run, you should enter five fishy types. The program automatically creates and assigns variables called "fish.1", "fish.2", "fish.3" and so on because the ".i" is actually the loop counter which counts from 1 to 50. Notice the second part of the program goes through the fish names itself, looking for a match. Imagine how hard this would be if there were fifty fish to process... (see figure 3).

Don't think that you have to use numbers to reference the values which a compound variable can store all the time though.

Example listing 4

```
/* More Variable examples */
age. = "Unknown"
age.john = 28
age.brian = 15
age.mary = 25
age.anne = 34
SAY "Enter a name, please:"
PULL name
IF age.name = 'Unknown' THEN SAY "Sorry, I don't know " name
ELSE SAY "That person is" age.name "years old"

EXIT
```



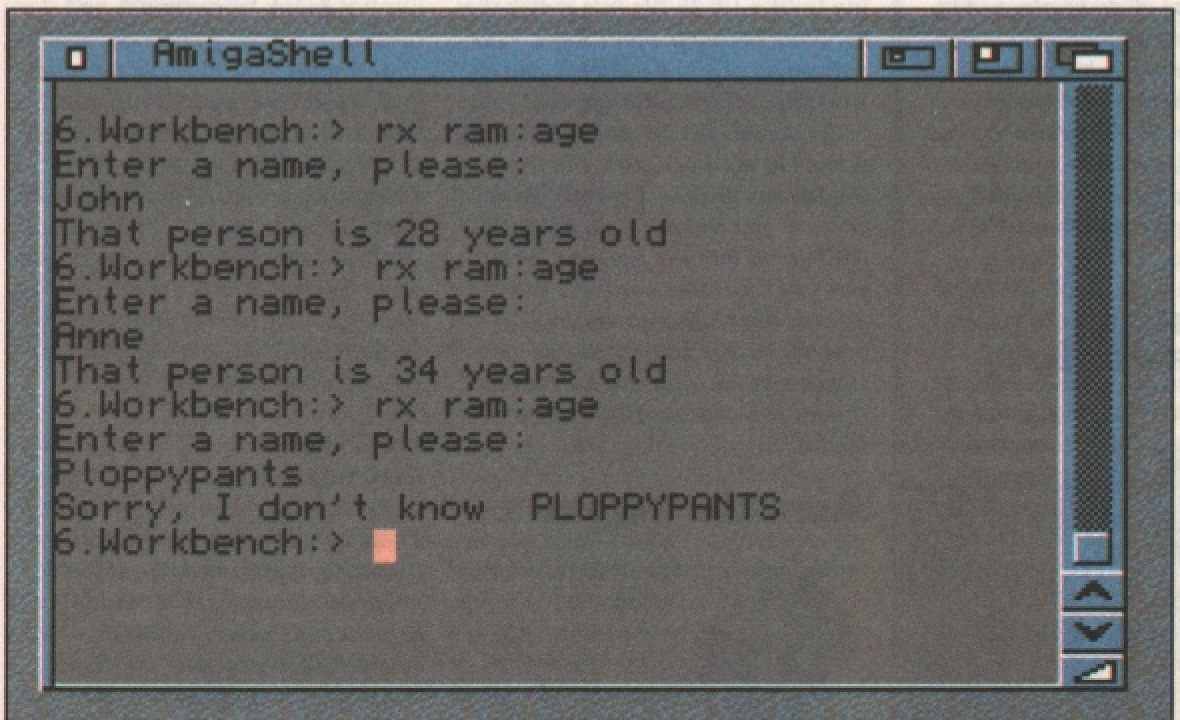
▲ Figure 3: compound variables are handy when it comes to dealing with lists of items which you want to store and maybe add to later.

Example four is an interesting little listing. It creates a miniature database of ages for four people and then asks you to pick a name (see example 4).

Of particular interest is the fact that when no extra reference is given, there is an automatic default value present (which we call "Unknown") and this can be tested for (see figure 4).

Next month, we'll be concentrating on making use of ARexx with existing programs: creating your own user-defined Macros to do exactly what you want with minimal effort. ■

John Kennedy



▲ Figure 4: Here in our database of four people, there is an automatic default value 'unknown' which comes into play when it doesn't recognise a reference.

It's all there on the CD



If you've got this month's CD-ROM edition you should be delighted with all the top stuff we've managed to cram on there: games, utilities, pictures, demos and lots more. We've also tried our best to include most items relevant to this month's workshop section.

And the Arexx Masterclass is no exception. You will find these listings included on the CD-ROM on the cover of this month's CD-ROM edition. Go to the drawer called Magazine\Arexx Masterclass and you should find the tutorial stuff there. You will also find some programs from previous ARexx Masterclass features: please read the text file before running them!

Logos, meanings and mysteries:

CD ROM — CD32 queries, ParNET and various other CD ROM-related problems.

Expansion — All about upgrading RAM, operating systems and processors.

Accessories — Plug-in hardware of any kind: scanners, disk drives etc.

Programs — Answers to queries on particular pieces of software.

Sound — Music, sampling, MIDI and anything that makes a loud noise.

Utilities — Miscellaneous tools to keep your Amiga running smoothly.

Printers — Form-feeds, page-breaks, preferences and lots, lots more!

Monitors — Monitors, TVs, modulators, screen-modes and all that stuff.

Graphics — Pixels, sprites, animation, pictures. In one small word: graphics.

Business — Spreadsheets, databases, organisers, accounts ...

Comms — Everything you need answering about the internet

Help — Not everything fits into a pigeonhole, but anything you like fits in here.

Q&A

They're back, and they're ready for action. CU Amiga's moderately handsome yet still intelligent dynamic duo are ready to battle with your hardest technical problems and dilemmas.



Lisa, tired of chasing Tony around the office for Q&A, let him have it. Poor, poor lad ...



On seeing Tony's fate. Mat quickly scribbled down the answers before taking the first plane back to Aussie.

Good on ya

I have an A600 with a 40Mb hard drive, a Citizen ABC printer and a Power Computing quad speed CD-ROM drive. I've now decided to take the plunge and upgrade to an Amiga Technologies A1200. I am going to buy one from a friend who wants to sell his so he can buy an A4000. What do I need to get to enable my current A600 peripherals to work with the A1200.

Richard Jones
Perth

Congratulations on deciding to upgrade, you'll have a great time with the A1200. Your hard drive, assuming it's an internal one, will work fine on the A1200 – just follow the fitting instructions in our May '95 issue. Likewise your Citizen printer just needs to be plugged in and you'll be pumping out colour pictures to your heart's content.

The CD-ROM drive will also work happily on the A1200 without modification, just slide the Squirrel interface into the PCMCIA slot as you do on the A600 and it'll work fine.

Adorage aggravation

Many thanks for your answer to my Adorage SSA demo query, 'Adorage blues' in CU Amiga, February issue. Unfortunately, I am still unable to use the program and shall therefore put it on ice until you are able to assist me further.

Using Opus5, I set about transferring IconX from my Workbench C directory to the C directory on my Adorage working disc. I was presented with the error message 'As Error Occyrred Copying IconX DOS Error: Disk is full.'

When I checked the available space on the Adorage working disk it was 967b. The IconX file however, says it needs 1452b. My 1200 has 240Mb hard disc and 4Mb expansion board. Please help. What do I do now?

Roy Firth
No address supplied

My, you are demanding aren't you. Firstly let's clear up a slight misunderstanding you seem to have.

The problem you're having is that there isn't enough space on the floppy disk that Adorage is on, the amount of hard drive space or RAM in your computer will have no bearing on this.

As to your current problem, trying to fit a 1452b file into a disk that only has 967b left won't work, your only solution will be delete some of your files off the Adorage disk.

To do this use DOpus and try removing the Logo_IFF file from the Images drawer. This will however leave you without a foreground file to load into the program when creating animations (unless you already have some others) so it's probably worth copying the file to somewhere on your hard drive first. Again, you can use DOpus to do this.

Auntie Agnus

I read with great interest your reply in February issue to a letter from Derek Bailey asking about upgrading an old A2000 from 512k of chip ram to 1Mb of chip ram. You asked if a reader could help with the various modifications needed to increase the Chip memory for Amiga motherboards. I carried out a similar modification on my B2000 (rev 4.4) last month, here's how I did it ...

Having installed the 1Mb agnus you need to alter two jumpers on the motherboard, so open the A2000 and take off the PSA and drive mount once again. You should find two solder pads labelled J500 under where the PSU would be if you hadn't just removed it. There's a trace of solder joining the two pads and you have to cut it so that the jumper is open. Shame Commodore didn't put some pins and a jumper block there, I used a scalpel.

Next find jumper J101 which is near the power connector and a load of upright cylinder thingies. J101 has three pins two of which are covered by a jumper block. You need to move the jumper block from pins 1 and 2 to pins 2 and 3.

Put your Amiga back together and, assuming everything went well and you manage to boot up, open a shell and type 'avail'. You'll now see that the maximum chip ram is now 1047552 bytes (I don't know what happened to the other kilobytes but there you go). Time for that Hi-Res Interlaced Overscanned Magic Workbench you couldn't have before ...

Martin Bahn
East Yorkshire

Thanks for that handy tip Martin, it's much appreciated. We should point out, however, that we don't recommend readers follow this course of action unless they're familiar with the insides of the Amiga and are very careful doing it – getting it wrong will clobber your Amiga good and proper! We do not

want to be held responsible if you damage your system, so get a pro to do it.

CIA shock

I recently fitted a new Canon BJC bubble jet to my A500 and since doing so the mouse has stopped working. It moves left and right but no longer goes up or down. It's really annoying. Can you give me any hints as to what's gone wrong.

Patrick Divan
Bristol

It's very simple, there are two chips inside your Amiga, collectively known as CIA chips and it looks like they're dead, no more, kaput! This can happen by plugging in the printer while the Amiga is on. These two chips control the mouse port, joystick, disk drive, serial interface and printer and by attaching the printer without turning the Amiga off you've damaged them.

There are two solutions, one buy a new chip: try calling one of the Amiga repair centres such as Silica: when we last checked they cost about £20.

Alternatively, try swopping the two CIA chips around. To do this open the Amiga, remove the metal shielding and locate them – they're labelled CIA ODD and CIA EVEN. Gently lift them out and swop them over, if you're lucky the mouse will work. You may lose some other functions though, the disk drive for instance, but as you have a hard drive this might not be a major problem until you get a replacement set of chips.

The future's so bright ...

I've just returned to the Amiga after several years away from it. Previously I had an A500 Plus, now I've just bought an A1200 from my local Escom store, and having had a quick glimpse through the pages of CU Amiga Magazine I have only one thing to say – the Amiga is far from being on its last legs as some people seem to think.

The power of the peripherals now available (SCSI CD-ROM drives, 040 accelerators) and the amazing applications around (FinalWriter 4, WordWorth 5, FinalCalc etc) make the products that used to be out when I had my A500 look really sad by comparison.

However, this is getting away from my real reason for writing, namely, will the Lexmark 1050 colour printer work on the A1200? A friend is selling his PC system when he moves to the USA shortly and I can buy the printer off him cheap.

Paul Winters
Glasgow

We're in total agreement with your comments about the current Amiga. Although Commodore are no more, and we're still waiting on hardware news from Amiga Technologies, the software now coming out is certainly the highest quality it's ever been.

Unfortunately the Lexmark printer needs Microsoft Windows to work properly and as a result won't work with the Amiga. However, if you look around you'll find many other printers of equally good quality available that will, look out for anything that's Epson compatible as a good starting block for Amiga compatibility.

Which CD-ROM drive is best?

A friend of mine has told me that computer CD-ROM drives are simply normal HiFi compact disc players that have been modified. Is this true and if it is how can I adapt the compact disc player on my stereo to work with my A1200.

Does the 'digital out' socket on the back the unit have something to do with this? If I can adapt it, which CD drive do you recommend I buy?

Adrian Poole
Staffordshire

Unfortunately you can't adapt your HiFi CD player to work on the Amiga. The digital out port on your CD is intended for use with amplifiers that support Digital input – producing better quality amplification and sound reproduction. It's also possible that VideoCD boxes will be released that take this Digital output and convert it into sound and pictures for displaying on a TV, although this is becoming less likely as time goes by.

As for the best dedicated Amiga CD drive checkout Power Computing or Hisoft Squirrel based systems, both of which are very impressive units.

The great CD32 FMV debate

I would like to thank you for supporting our favourite computer over the last couple of very turbulent years. I am pleased to say that CU Amiga Magazine is currently my favourite magazine.

However, I feel that I must put Tony Horgan right on a Q&A letter in your February issue. A Mr K Walsh wrote in to say that he had a CD32 FMV card without its adaptor.

On close inspection of the whole module you will find that it actually consists of a shielded circuit board (the metal bit) and a loopback section with the CD32 coloured plastic around it. These can be separated and hence the loopback is lost. Just to help, the loopback has two stickers on the inside of it (only really visible with the actual card removed). The first has REV A and a barcode on it while the other has CDGS LOOPBACK and a barcode with the following number below it; 8515293365480001000565. I have written to AT about this.

My advice to Mr Walsh is to contact them at their new address and see if they can source a loopback connector for him.

Sven Harvey, West Midlands.

Thanks Sven, it's always good when readers come up trumps with a bit of handy information. If any other readers out there feel that they can help out on any of the other problems that they read in these pages please write in.

I'll be back, for sure

I am writing in response to my phone call to you about my letter printed (Q+A February edition 'CD32 FMV cart') and your reply which you printed and repeated back to me on the phone. I have the FMV card, I rang Amiga Technologies as you said and they said I was right, it is a real one.

However, it's just that mine does not have the 150-way female connector. Anyway they could not help me. I'm not waiting for a fresh batch of SX1s from the USA. I'm now flogging my card, someone out there with an SX1 will do.

My only options are to either get a 12" laserdisk player or wait for DVD due out soon! It's a shame I cannot utilise my CD32 to its potential, what a waste of a good machine.

K. A. Walsh
London

Okay, fair enough, you seem to have been right all along. Obviously what has happened is that the unit you have was retro-fitted with an gender adaptor which has since parted company with the main cartridge. Had you bought this from a shop, we would suggest that you return it and demand a refund, but we understand this was bought second hand from a private seller, so you probably won't have much luck on that score.

It is a shame that the CD32 FMV module never really took off in a big way, but with AT's plans for using CD32 technology in 'set-top' home video boxes, maybe something will emerge in future.

As for laserdisks you could buy one, but it's possible that DVD might kill them off in the long run making your investment worthless and, unfortunately, although DVD is definitely a very good option official units either computerised or in a standard TV/HiFi format won't be released until this autumn, and even then they'll be well above the price you can get FMV units for but HiSoft's MPEG is on the way too.

Send your Q&A problems to...

You can send your technical problems [or answers - Ed] to CU Amiga by the following means:
By letter to Q&A, CU Amiga, Priory Court, 30-32 Farringdon Lane, London, EC1R 3AU.
Email: Q+A@cu Amiga.demon.co.uk.
Sadly we can't personally answer Q&A problems, so please don't send SAEs or phone us.

Backchat

Forget the cold weather, people are getting hot under the collar in this month's reader's debate. Want to turn up the heat? Join in and write in.

Put your money where your mouth is

How am I and other members of the Amiga-using public supposed to believe that the Amiga is still going strong and will survive the competition from Mega Drives, SNESes, Saturns, Play Stations and PCs? It's very disheartening when you walk into any high street computer shop and find that the Amiga software display has been relegated to the darkest corner at the rear of the shop. And if that is not a big enough insult these shelves are only stocked with old releases. How can the Amiga be expected to survive without the support from the retailers?
Andrew Redd, Essex.

A good point. The only way around this seems to be to keep going into these shops and asking for Amiga hardware and software products. Then maybe retailers might wake up and realise that there is a huge market out there for Amiga products. It's not just Amiga users who are annoyed with this situation, software companies are also finding it increasingly irritating. Peter Calver from Audiogenic whose excellent game Super Tennis Champs is hardly anywhere to be seen in the shops is incredibly frustrated by the situation. He urges people to "vote with their wallets" which means that if we show that we mean business and we actually want to spend money in their shops this might get them moving. Or failing that contact the software companies direct for their product.

You've raised a valid point in your letter and we are hoping to look at this matter and clear it up in depth next issue. In the meantime turn to our points of view pages where Lisa Collins has asked around to find out what some retailers' policies are concerning the Amiga.

The price is right

I'd like to add some more points to a reply I read in your magazine concerning the price of the Amiga. Although you agreed with the letter's author that the price was high you said it was justified. I agree. Here, in Germany, the Amiga only costs 650DM which is outstanding value for money compared to other current computers. Also, the software that is being shipped with stock A1200s is brilliant. I mean: look at PCs. Do they have anything like Scala or WorkBench? Can they immediately generate titles for their home-videos without any additional hard or software? No, not at all. So why complain about the price?

I think that people are complaining now about the current price of the Amiga because for some time, due to Commodore's closure and other difficulties, A1200s (and CD32s) were sold for a lot less than their normal retail price. The price for A1200 (with a HD and 4Mb RAM all in one) at 980DM is brilliant and it is a very affordable price for a computer. The A4000's price however ...
Marc, Germany.

Cobblers

Call me a miserable old git, boring old fart or whatever else but I think the net wedding feature (February 96 CU Amiga Magazine) was the most crap, infantile, pathetic piece of journalism I have ever read. I'll never forget Mat Bettinson's worldly wise "super highway" quote: "You may not take it seriously but you should it happened, it's real." – Cobblers.

I realise that you have to cater for younger purely games playing readers but I am sure you do not not want every other type of Amiga user to desert to other publications. They will with too much of this type of article, it was the pits.

Unfortunately, I have no doubt that this letter will be ignored or publisher with some smart alec reply. Be warned though, you are surely aware of the media perceptions that for every person that bothers to phone or write about something then hundreds or thousands think the same but never get around to doing anything about it. On the plus side ProCalc was the best cover disk I've ever found on any magazine.
RD Armour-Chelu, Kent.

Why do you assume that the piece was aimed at younger readers? It was a topical article which was informing us about something which is really happening. It was the first wedding to take place on the net and we were there to report it, what's infantile about that? As for your warning that every letter represents thousands of unwritten ones – we've received tons of phonecalls and letters congratulating us on this article and only one criticising it – yours. Since our article similar reports have appeared in national newspapers and on television.

The dog's ...

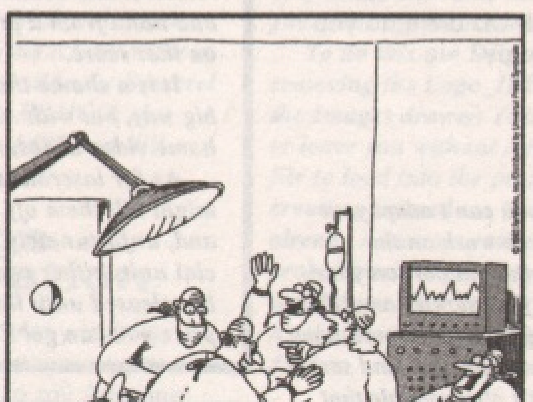
I enjoyed your net wedding article (Feb 96). It's nice to see some romance on the net. I'm tired of hearing all these stories about the net being a cesspit of paedophiles and porno freaks.
Barry MacDonald, Bracknell.

THE FAR SIDE By GARY LARSON



"We're screwed, Marge. Big Al was our star attraction, the king of the show. ... And now he's gone."

THE FAR SIDE By GARY LARSON



Carlton falls for the old rubber-scalpel gag.

Letter of the month

The way forward

This letter is aimed at users who have been reluctant about upgrading and who complain about the lack of interest of software developers. I bought one of the early A1200s after owning an A500 for a few years. Then I bought a hard drive a while later. The point is, that one single peripheral completely transformed my Amiga into a genuinely productive and useful machine.

I used to think that a hard drive would just make file access faster and prevent me from stacking up floppy disks, but it is so much more useful. For instance I simply couldn't run programs like Real 3D, Imagine or play games like Worms, Alien Breed 3D etc. without one. Amiga Technologies should really not be selling Amigas without hard drives, although the Amiga philosophy has always been one of affordable entry models which grow gradually with users' needs.

Hard drives are essential, if you intend to use your Amiga for any serious application and quite a few games rely on hard drives to make them playable. I would seriously avoid any games which I knew were not HD installable. Piracy is not an excuse against games not being installable. If Amiga floppy users want more games like Alien Breed they should give a hard drive serious consideration. After all, a 3.5" IDE will squeeze into an A1200.

There is no longer any reason for not buying a HD. HD prices have fallen by a ridiculous amount in the last year. Looking through your mag: 850Mb costs less than £200, even 420Mb is only £125 – this is the same price as only three or four Amiga games (two or three console games).

To anyone who complains that the A1200, with its 020 processor is now behind the times, the answer is simple, save up some money and buy an accelerator – which are also dropping in price these days. There are bound to be some affordable second-hand 030s for sale, with a lot of serious users looking for 040/060s. Even buy 4Mb of Fast RAM. It may sound a little harsh, but when you consider people spend probably £1000s on PCs, to upgrade a basic A1200 to a very usable Amiga set-up costs around £450 (or much less when buying second-hand). i.e. a 50MHz 030 + 4Mb fast RAM + 420Mb 3.5" HD. Even a small second hand HD, which would cost little more than the average game, would make a world of a difference, although as is often said repeatedly – upgrade to the largest you can afford, or at least three or four times as much HD space as you think you need now. You'll regret it otherwise. I know, I out-grew my 120Mb HD very quickly a few years ago.

Now that games producers have started to develop for accelerators, there seems to be a new lease of life in the Amiga as a games machine. The CU demo of XTreme Racing really flies along on my 040 and it's great to play AB3D in all its glory. I don't think this kind of software will continue to be produced for long, unless a lot of people upgrade and buy the new software. The 'RAMming it home' article (CU Feb 96) makes a lot of sense. Let's hope that both users and the industry are listening.

Forces combined

I noticed the interesting Breathless/Power Computing offer in your magazine. I think it's time software, hardware manufacturers, the magazines and AT themselves all pulled together more to stress the upgrade issue. It would be worth including details of games which benefit from memory and accelerators with the hardware and details of the hardware available with the games. This sort of co-operation makes sense. I mean, where better to advertise your accelerator than inside the box of a game which would benefit from one?

Maybe all the magazines and Amiga Technologies should start a major survey of Amiga users. Discover how many have expanded systems, and what their configuration is. Things have changed a lot for the Amiga both hardware and software-wise since Commodore went under, not to mention the radical changes in the console and PC markets. In addition, the survey would pool the ideas of everyone who supports the Amiga and show to software houses that the Amiga is still worth investing in. A carefully designed survey organised by AT, in co-operation with the magazines – or wider press might benefit the Amiga immensely – it can't do any harm! I can't remember the last time I saw an Amiga survey, but things have changed so much lately, surely another one is due.

Bad attitude

Recent stories about the attitude of some Escom salespersons concerning the Amiga are quite worrying. I hope AT will take steps to ensure Amigas are promoted properly, especially since every other platform is on display. Shop displays, are what catches the consumer's eye. How many more people are likely to discover the Amiga if it is not on display?

Finally, if software houses make a hard drive and extra memory/processor obligatory for every release from now on (assuming the software was of a high quality, like the 'Doom-clones' rating 90% +) and there was a kind of hardware/ software co-operation, how many people could honestly refuse to upgrade their system?

Gerard Callaghan, Missouri, USA.

Rammed home

I'd just like to mention a few things about your Points of View article in the Feb 96 issue of CU.

Alan Dykes was going on about the min. spec of miggys, pcs and macs. He stated that the min. spec on the miggy was 2Mb RAM and no hard disk (or thereabouts). However, in my experience, I've found that the majority of Amiga users (in comms anyway) have around 6Mb RAM and at least 1/2 Gig HD. It's pretty rare to find someone that has a base level machine or at least a base level w/hd.

I totally agree with everything Alan said in that article. But why don't developers just auto config their software a bit like expansion boards. XTR does it with no apparent speed loss ... a friend and I ran it on both our A1200s at the same time and hardly noticed any difference. He has 2Mb chip no fast and 214Mb HD. I have 2Mb chip, 4Mb fast and 1/2 Gig HD.

Peter Kirby, Barnet.

A pat on the back

I would just like to thank you for your magazine CU Amiga. I have found it to be useful as well as fun. The magazines here in the USA all seem to think everyone reading them already knows all there is about the Amiga. Your projects have gone a long way to help me understanding the Amiga and computers. Now that the machine is once again in production, I hope to see more good things from you. Keep up the good work.

Tom Gower, Texas, USA.

Double pat

Since my son had his A600 a couple of Christmases ago we have regularly bought and read various Amiga mags. These are all kept in a box under his computer desk. Looking back through the mags it was interesting to note that the one we have purchased most is CU Amiga Magazine. I think this is probably due to the consistently good balance and content of articles, reviews, technical help etc and the quality and usefulness of the cover disk. It is also a change for a magazine to invite personal contact with its readers rather than just taking the £4 or so with a don't call us and we won't call you attitude.

Recently I had cause to contact your advertising department for help with a problem regarding one of your previous advertisers. I had returned a faulty drive and was having difficulty getting either a replacement or a refund. Finally, and only after your intervention I received a refund slip. This was only after they had been phoned by your Marianna Masters. I don't know what she said to them but it did the trick. Thanks.

Ken Dryden, Cambs.

Firm sale? We say NO!

As I am on a tight budget, I have been forced to stop reading CU Amiga Magazine as it has now gone firm sale. I cannot commit to paying out the monthly sum of £4.50 just in case I'm broke. Why oh why is it now firm sale?

K Simmons, Bristol.

Firm Sale means that a newsagent has to buy a magazine and bear the cost if it doesn't sell. The opposite, SOR (sale or return) means newsagents return unsold copies of magazines to the distributor. CU Amiga Magazine is distributed by a company called Frontline, the country's premier magazine distributor. They definitely handle CU Amiga Magazine on an SOR basis. If you have problems getting the mag write to Mark Cowie, CUA, Frontline, Park House, 117 Park Road, Peterborough PE1 2TS.

Points of view

CD-ROM - saviour of the Amiga scene

by Tony Horgan

Many people both inside and outside of the Amiga scene are surprised at the way the market has stood up over the past couple of years. Amiga users have always been a discerning bunch; they know what they want from their computer and won't be taken in by media hype and advertising alone, which explains why they bought Amigas in the first place, and is part of the reason they have not abandoned the platform.

> **Every so often, the state of the art moves on, leaving a wake of washed up and redundant technology.**

Even so, every so often the state of the art moves on, leaving a wake of washed up and redundant technology, which is where many think the Amiga should be floundering. It's managed to stay on the boat partly due to its very loyal user base, but also thanks to the fairly recent introduction of affordable CD-ROM technology which has revolutionised the Amiga scene.

CD-ROM is the perfect medium for mass distribution of the Amiga's unique shareware scene. CD is the international standard medium for both computer data and music, which has lead to very low duplication costs that mean CDs can be sold for as little as a fiver, or even less. With third independent organisations such as the Aminet playing a pivotal role in the compilation, management and distribution of the best Amiga-specific shareware, backed up by hundreds of themed CD compilations from other producers, the Amiga is free to exist, in some form, with or without support from the established commercial software producers.

However, while this has kept the Amiga scene going through what could have been very lean times, we still need to continue development of the core commercial applications – the likes of Wordworth, PageStream, Photogenics, Personal Paint and the merry band of 3D rendering systems. If the financial backers of these packages pull out of the market, all will not be lost, for then it will be the turn of the shareware developers to pick up the gauntlet and keep on keeping on, running the show on their own terms.



Tony Horgan is CU Amiga Magazines' technical Editor

Have money, will travel. But where to?

by Lisa Collins

I am sick and tired of the amount of letters we are starting to receive which end with those three little words: "disgusted and disillusioned". What is causing this heightened level of unhappiness? The apparent lack of availability of Amiga hardware and software.

I found tales of incompetent shop assistants advising Amiga enthusiasts to buy a rival piece of hardware and little or no shelf space for Amiga games very worrying. One man in Bury St Edmunds even went as far as to offer his services, for free, to help his local Escom shop display the Amiga's talent. We've yet to find out if Escom took him up on this generous offer. Also, recent rumours that Escom shops had received a memo telling them to remove all their Amigas from their premises were a little more than disconcerting.

> **Despite rumours to the contrary Escom .... are going to continue to stock Amigas.**

Judging from sackloads of mail we receive, there's a huge army of frustrated Amiga users out there armed with cash to spend on upgrades, new machine and software but don't know where to get the goods.

In next month's issue Alan and I will trail the country to find out what is going on, who is stocking what and where. In the meantime let me try to clear this confusion up.

Despite rumours to the contrary, Escom have confirmed that they are going to continue to stock Amigas and are committed to promoting them in their shops. Also, although reported to be stocking Amigas, Dixons and Currys, however, "do not stock Amiga products and have not done so for at least two years", according to Helen Sargent, Corporate Affairs Manager.

HMV's Oxford Street branch according to Trish Saunders "will stock all Amiga software and, whereas other smaller branches will have a limited amount of Amiga products, you will be able to order a particular game through us (HMV) if not available."

I hope that helps, until next month ...



Lisa Collins is CU Amiga Magazines' Deputy Editor

Cover disks are saving the market not killing it



by Alan Dykes

Before Jonathon Anderson left Amiga Technologies at Christmas he stated his belief that magazines cover mounting full commercial software harms the Amiga. His point of view is shared by many in the software industry and, indeed, by many readers too: Every piece of software we cover mount is supposedly putting a nail in the Amiga's coffin – apparently no-one is buying new software because they already have all they need from our front cover. Oh yes. But does anyone remember whether there was some software in the Magic Pack by Amiga Technologies? Obviously not, it could have destroyed the market!

Let's straighten this matter out. There is still a healthy market for word processors, databases, spreadsheets, rendering software etc, and why? Because we've been promoting them all through the ups and downs of the last two years. My theory is that if people hadn't got this software from magazines, if they hadn't been offered cheap upgrades from cover mounted software, the market would be in a worse state than it is in at the moment. Buying commercial software on the front cover of CU Amiga Magazine (or any of our competitors, or in the Amiga Magic pack with its superb utility suite), makes you realise just what's available and just how good it is. Programs like PageStream 2.2, Image FX and Imagine have encouraged many, who previously may not have considered investing in this sort of software to upgrade, to continue to use their Amigas for serious applications.

What about games? We have not cover mounted a commercial release yet. You have never seen a 'worth twenty five quid' badge on a games disk, on any Amiga magazine I believe. That's because we (and the other magazine publishers) have an agreement with the games publishers not to do so. This agreement dates back years and no-one has yet broken it. But consider this: where has it got us? This 'NO COMMERCIAL GAMES!' crusade has not succeeded in saving the games market from a situation where a title like Leading Lap was not going to be released – despite good scores in all the magazines it was reviewed in.

My indignation is tempered by the fact that the two markets (games and technical) are admittedly different. The technical market is upgrade led. People with version 1 of a program inevitably upgrade to version 2 and so

> **Name me more than a handful of games where the sequel was better than the original and I'll eat my Doctor Martens!**

on. They want the improvements and they want them now! But name me more than a handful of games where the sequel was better than the original and I'll eat my Doctor Martens. The games market is not upgrade led, so the argument above holds more water in this climate.

As a magazine we cannot afford to pay the full development costs of a piece of software, not at £4.50 an issue. But we do showcase the best new software, either by putting an older full version of a utility or a demo of some software on the front cover. Don't forget though, these programmers, publishers and developers still have to make money from you going out and buying these products and upgrades!

■ Alan Dykes is CU Amiga Magazines' Editor

Workbench 4 – just begging for it!



by Mat Bettinson

The commonest problems we hear of are anonymous crashes, gurus and such forth. AmigaDOS will help out under some conditions to indicate which program is failing but conversely there are plenty of errors which can't be tracked down with any method other than an exhausting process of elimination. I have found it difficult to create a reliable complex automatic Internet system on an Amiga that doesn't crash at some stage in the night.

Of course the problem isn't the Amiga's fault as such and Commodore provided tools to help programmers find illegal memory accesses. These tools, known as Enforcer and MungWall, require a Memory Management Unit or MMU to trap and document errant memory accesses (crashes are usually caused by programs writing to parts of memory that are otherwise engaged).

The trouble is the Amiga doesn't come with an MMU as stock, least of all something like Enforcer built-in. Currently, the most reliable operating systems are Unix variants and for this reason they are responsible for running most of the Internet. The feature of Unix that makes this reliability possible is known as Memory Protection, something that the new Workbench 4 is begging for. This means that tasks are controlled by an MMU so that they can not access memory outside the areas they have allocated. The net theory as a task might crash itself but it can't crash the machine. Interestingly, this is why some Unix ports to the Amiga aren't nearly as reliable as this Unix counterparts. In short, Unix can handle the buggy code but AmigaOS can not (AMosaic

> **Currently the most reliable operating systems are Unix variants and for this reason they are responsible for running most of the internet.**

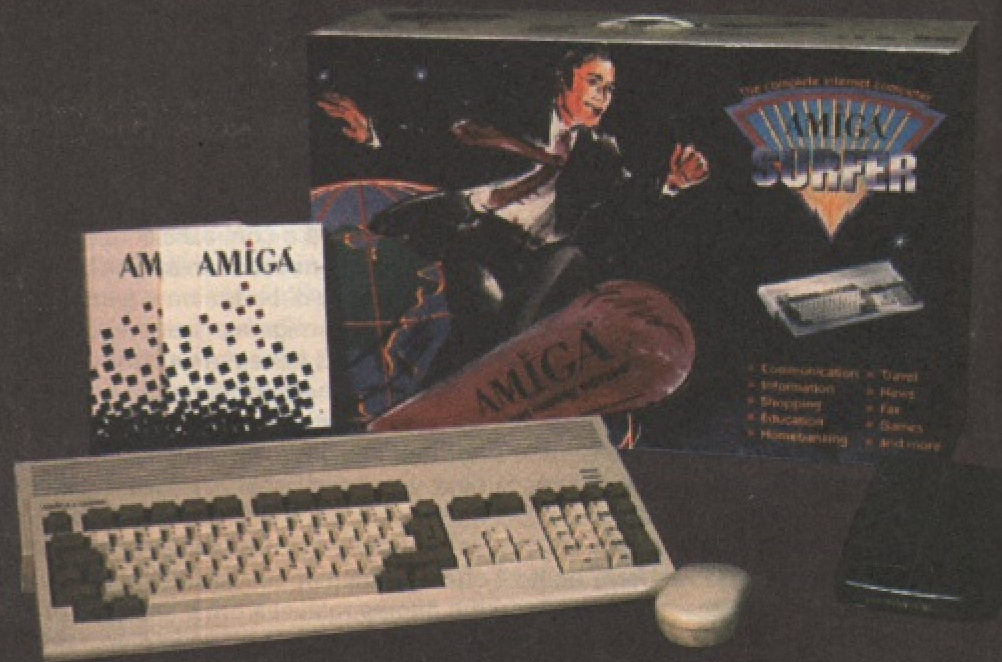
for example). If the future Workbench 4 has the strong features of previous incarnations coupled with memory protection and other modern OS features, it would truly be a force to be reckoned with.

■ Mat Bettinson is CU Amiga Magazines' technical Staff Writer

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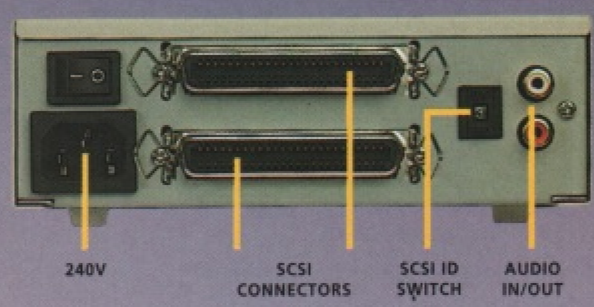
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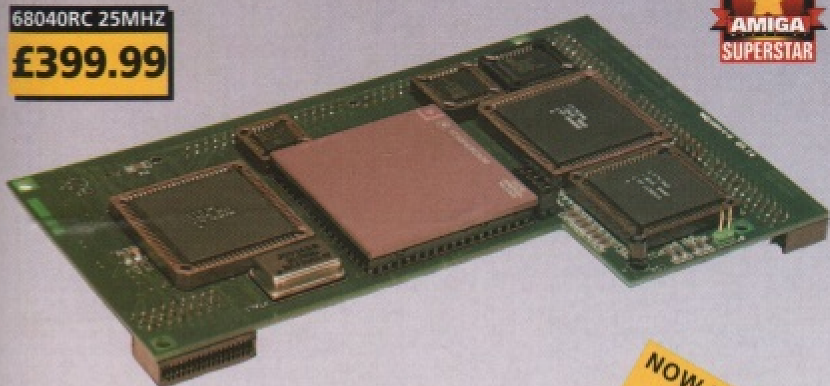
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